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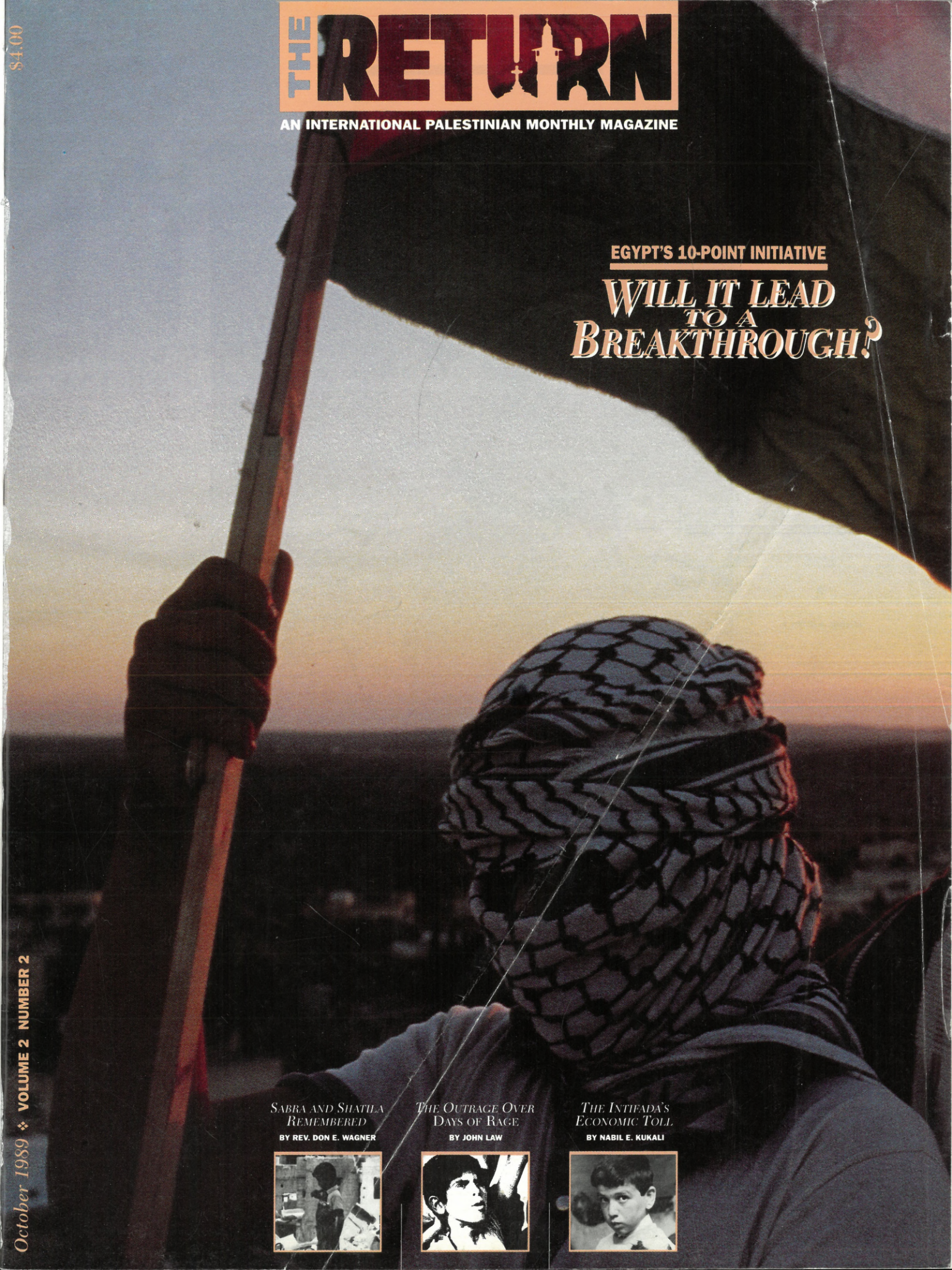
THE RETURN

AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE



EGYPT'S 10-POINT INITIATIVE

WILL IT LEAD TO A BREAKTHROUGH?

SABRA AND SHATILA REMEMBERED
BY REV. DON E. WAGNER

THE OUTRAGE OVER DAYS OF RAGE
BY JOHN LAW

THE INTIFADA'S ECONOMIC TOLL
BY NABIL E. KUKALI

October 1989 ❖ VOLUME 2 NUMBER 2

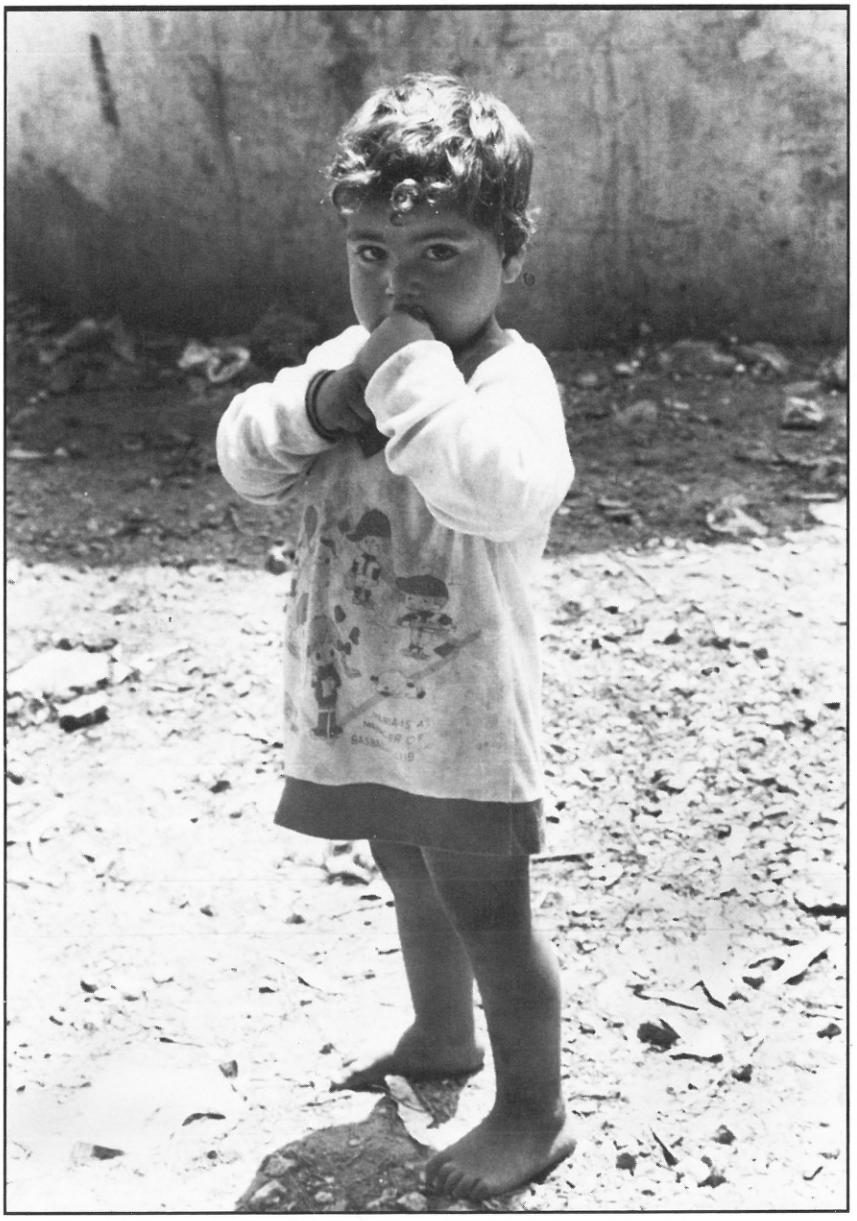


PHOTO: SAID ELATAB/MIDDLE EAST PHOTO

In

Search

of a

Brighter

Tomorrow.

❖

C O N T E N T S

page 6

page 10

page 20

page 30

EDITORIAL

3. *Arafat Should be Granted a Visa: It is in the United States' Best Interests*

FROM THE PUBLISHER

5. *Israel: A Bastion of Oppression*

FEATURE

6. *Egypt's 10-Point Peace Proposal, Could it Lead to a Breakthrough?*

BY RAPHAEL CALIS

FEATURE

10. *Sabra and Shatila Remembered*

BY REV. DON E. WAGNER

ANALYSIS

13. *Driving Down a Dead End Road: U.S. Policy on Palestine*

BY HASSAN ABDUL RAHMAN

ANALYSIS

16. *Forced Soviet-Jewish Immigration to Israel Complicates the Peace Process*

BY AMBASSADOR CLOVIS MAKSOUD

IN BRIEF

18. *News Highlights*

ANALYSIS

20. *The Impact of the Intifada on Israel's Economy*

BY NABIL E. KUKALI

COVER PHOTO:
Masked youth hoisting the Palestinian flag in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

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A. KELER-S. BINOVIC

C O N T E N T S

ARAB-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

25. *The Rage Over* Days of Rage, *Shame on PBS*

BY JOHN LAW

ISRAELI AFFAIRS

30. *The Histadrut: Israel's Racist Labor Federation*

BY MITCHELL KAIDY

ISRAELI FOREIGN AFFAIRS

33. *Harari, Israel's Man in Panama: Why the U.S. Ignores the Israeli Connection*

BY JANE HUNTER

BOOK REVIEW

37. *Ibrahim Souss's* Letter To A Jewish Friend

BY HALA JABBOUR

PALESTINIAN CULTURE

40. *Preserving the Legacy through National Costumes*

BY FARIDA TEAGUE

REPRINT

44. *Who Killed Amjad Jabril?*

WASHINGTON TIMES EDITORIAL

ARAFAT SHOULD BE GRANTED A VISA:

It is in the United States' Best Interests

PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT YASSER ARAFAT.

Should the United States grant a visa to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to attend the U.N. General Assembly which convened on September 25 in New York?

Although at press time President Arafat had not decided to attend the U.N. General Assembly, this issue, as in the past, has stirred controversy in U.S. and Israeli circles. It is a controversy that has been generated needlessly by the inordinate influence Israel exercises over U.S. Middle East policy.

The key player here is the United States. It is the host country on whose territory the United Nations headquarters is located. Last year, then-U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz denied Arafat an entry visa. This prompted the U.N. General Assembly in its entirety—including, ironically, the U.S. delegation—to travel to Geneva to hear what Arafat had to say.

Irrespective of whether President Arafat decides to attend the U.N. General Assembly, the key question from a U.S. perspective should be: Is it in the U.S. interest to deny Arafat an entry visa and therefore prohibit him from attending the U.N. General Assembly? The answer is a definite "No!" Granting Arafat a visa, if he chooses to address the U.N. General Assembly, is in the best interests of the United States.

One, it would help restore some of the credibility the United States lost when it denied Arafat an entry visa last year. The entire international community disagreed with the U.S. decision and, on that basis, decided to convene instead in Geneva.

Two, unlike last year, the United States currently has a policy of talking to the PLO. It would seem silly to authorize the U.S. ambassador to Tunis to talk to PLO leaders, while at the same time denying a visa to Arafat to address the United Nations or travel freely throughout the United States. A visa denial would have serious consequences on the shaky U.S.-PLO relationship, and on U.S. credibility and influence with the PLO.

Three, under Arafat's leadership, the Palestinians have adopted daring moves toward achieving peace in the Middle East. These moves include declarations relating to the recognition of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for peace negotiations in the Middle East. The PLO has also renounced all forms of terrorism, and has indicated its willingness to recognize Israel. These moves were politically very risky for Arafat. If Arafat is continually rebuffed by the United States, it will hurt Arafat politically, and cast doubt on any role the United States might be able to play in a future peace process.

Four, Israeli intransigence must not be rewarded. If the

It would seem silly to authorize the U.S. ambassador to Tunis to talk to PLO leaders, while at the same time denying a visa to Arafat to address the United Nations.

United States were to deny an entry visa to Arafat, it would be rewarding the Israelis for their unwillingness to be cooperative and responsive to Palestinian peace overtures. Thus, U.S. leverage with the Israeli government would be weakened even further.

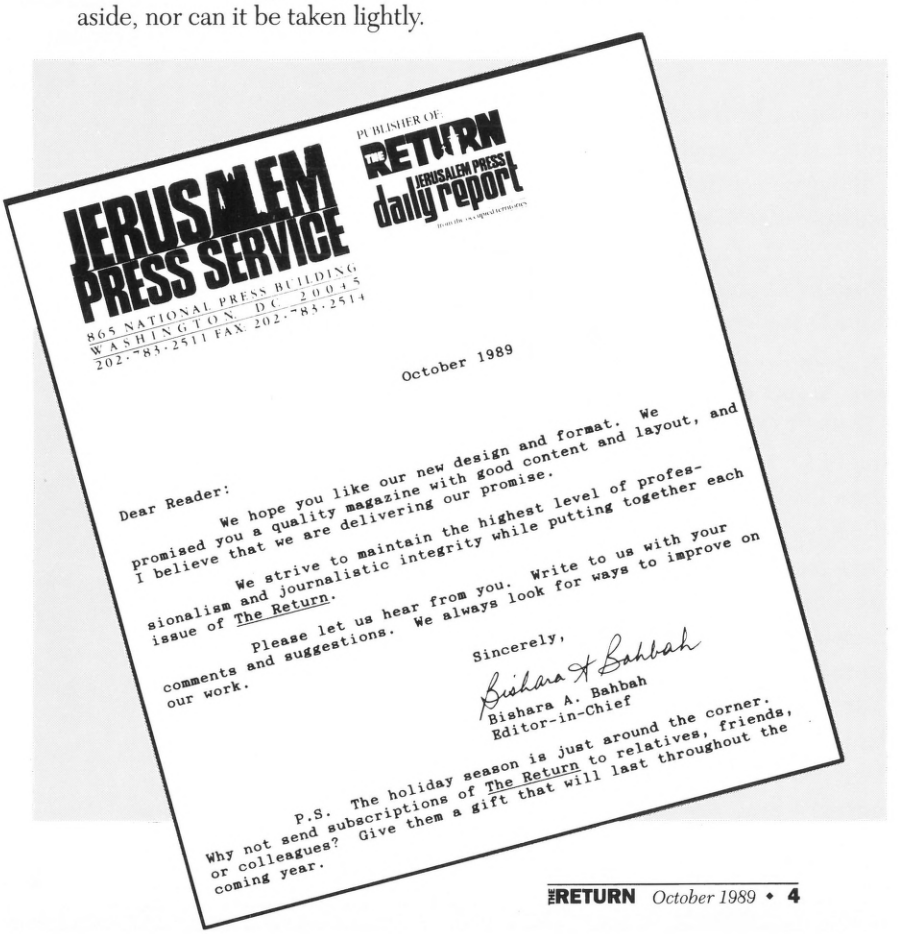
Five, there have been calls in the past to move the United Nations headquarters from the United States to a neutral country such as Switzerland. If Arafat were denied a visa, particularly under the present circumstances, this incident could give more credence to such a call. If that should ever happen, it would be a tremendous blow to U.S. prestige and international standing.

Six, a vast majority of the members of the U.N. General Assembly, including most U.S. allies, would probably criticize the United States for denying an entry visa to Arafat.

Besides, based on the host agreements signed between the United Nations and the United States, and according to the precedent of past practices, the United States cannot legally deny entry to Arafat unless it can claim that his entry would endanger U.S. national security.

Does anyone in the Bush administration really believe that Arafat's presence in the United States would in any way compromise U.S. national security?

If the United States is in any way interested in peace in the Middle East, it should realize that no peace can be achieved without the consent and full participation of the PLO. The PLO cannot be brushed aside, nor can it be taken lightly.



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Please let us hear from you. Write to us with your comments and suggestions. We always look for ways to improve on our work.

Sincerely,

Bishara A. Bahbah
Editor-in-Chief

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Publishers are urged to send books relating to the Middle East for reviews.

RAYMONDA HAWA TAWIL

ISRAEL: a BASTION OF OPPRESSION

For the second time since the beginning of the intifada, Israeli occupation authorities extended the closure of the Jerusalem-based office of the Palestine Press Service. On September 27, Israel's central district commander—in charge of administering East Jerusalem—ordered the closure of the PPS office until March 27, 1990.

On March 30, 1988, the Israeli occupation authorities ordered the offices of the Palestine Press Service shut. At the time, Israeli security sources claimed that the action was taken "for the sake of public welfare and the preservation of public order."

The New York Committee to Protect Journalists, whose honorary chairman is former CBS anchor Walter Cronkite, immediately wrote a letter of protest to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. The letter protested "the lack of due process in the closure." It also stated that—*[The] effect of the closure will be to cut off a major source of news on Palestinian affairs for the foreign and Israeli media. This, together with the media ban in the territories is, in our view, a violation of the rights of all journalists to gather and disseminate information, and of the right of the public to know.*

But protests fell on deaf ears. On September 30 of that same year, the Israeli occupation authorities prolonged the closure order, not for another six months, but for an entire year.

Israel's attack on the Palestine Press Service is not an isolated incident. It is part of a systematic and vicious assault on the Palestinian press and on freedom of speech. At one point during the intifada, 30 Arab journalists, including five members of the nine-person board of the Arab Journalists Association, were in prison. Many of these journalists remain in Israeli jails today. In addition, in May 1988 the Israeli occupation authorities ordered the permanent closure of *Al-Awdah [The Return] English Weekly Magazine* and *Al-Awdah Arabic Bi-Weekly Magazine.*

As far back as 1981, the Israeli occupation authorities shut down *Al-Shira'* magazine and, in August 1986 they shut down a daily newspaper, *Al-Mithaq.* The Israeli occupation authorities have also gone to the extent of closing down Israeli publications, such as *Derech Hanitzotz/Tariq Al-Sharara,* that were sympathetic to the Palestinians and to the principle of coexistence.

All of this leads us to one conclusion. Israel does not believe in freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Israel, through its occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and parts of southern Lebanon, is willing to commit the most outrageous crimes against humanity—all in the name of security.

Israel does not believe in freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

Israel's friends in the United States, Western Europe, and other parts of the world should know that Israel is not a bastion of democracy, but rather a bastion of oppression.❖

PRESIDENT YASSER ARAFAT WITH EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT HUSNI MUBARAK DURING A RECENT MEETING IN CAIRO. ❖

FILE PHOTO

EGYPT'S 10-POINT PEACE PROPOSAL

Could it Lead to a Breakthrough?

BY RAPHAEL CALIS

The Egyptian 10-point peace proposal has replaced the Israeli elections plan as the focal point of intensive diplomatic activity. Cairo submitted the 10 points in July as a means to advance stalemated efforts to hold elections in the occupied Palestinian lands of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since the introduction of the 10 points, the United Nations, the United States, and other Middle Eastern countries have given them close attention. ❖ Interviews with U.S. officials and high-ranking Arab diplomats, as well as with PLO leaders,

in early September indicated clearly that the fate of the Egyptian proposal was still hanging in the balance, and was the subject of intensive give-and-take between Washington and other capitals in the Middle East. State Department officials said that the outcome of these diplomatic exchanges was not expected to crystallize before the end of September at the earliest, when the Egyptian 10 points were slated to become the basis of diplomatic action at the normal session of the U.N. General Assembly.

But the writing was clearly on the wall. Major points of contention were being raised by all the parties, including the United States, to various specifics of the 10 points.

As for the Bush administration, State Department officials said in background discussions that the administration supported the 10 points because Egypt is so influential in the Middle East. Egypt is a member of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC)—comprised of Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and North Yemen—and therefore, has at least the implicit endorsement of the ACC and its member states. In addition, Egypt has a very special and close working relationship with the PLO. At the same time, Egypt is the only Arab country that has signed a peace treaty with Israel. Hence, its proposals would have to be taken seriously by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and other hardliners in Israel. Said one State Department official, "Egypt is a heavyweight in the region, and its pivotal role and influence cannot be ignored."

The State Department official also said that the Bush administration issued its acceptance of the Egyptian proposal with some qualifications. Those qualifications have not been publicly spelled out, but they were made "because Washington did not want Israel to feel that the U.S. and Egypt were ganging up together against Israel." That would have ensured Israel's knee-jerk rejection of the 10 points.

As of mid-September, the U.S. and Egyptian governments were still eagerly awaiting Israel's official reaction to the 10 points. Meanwhile, the Israeli coalition government was showing signs of a possible split on the question of whether Israel should accept or reject the 10 points. The crisis in Israel was precipitated in part by Israeli Labor party leader Shimon Peres, who is also Finance Minister in the Israeli Cabinet and a member of the inner Cabinet. When Peres announced his unconditional acceptance of the 10 points, he did so, much to the anguish of his Likud coalition partners.

Interviews conducted in Washington with PLO officials show that, in principle, the PLO supports the 10 points but finds them deficient on two issues it considers "non-negotiable." First, the 10 points make no reference to the PLO as the sole negotiating partner representing the Palestinian people, with the sole right

ISRAELI REACTIONS TO THE EGYPTIAN 10-POINT PEACE PROPOSAL

"[It is] unkosher."

PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK SHAMIR, LEADER OF THE LIKUD PARTY

"If a Palestinian delegation declares it is in accord with the elections plan and concurs with the 10 points, then I do not see a reason to prevent us from talking to it. . . . But the Palestinian delegation must exclude PLO personalities if it wants to discuss the elections plan with us."

MINISTER OF FINANCE SHIMON PERES, LEADER OF THE LABOR PARTY

Egypt should help set up talks between Israeli and Palestinian delegations. The meetings should take place in Cairo. Egypt is the one that will accept and publish the composition of the Palestinian delegation, after consultations with the various parties, which I will not specify, [but] including Israel.

DEFENSE MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN, A CONSERVATIVE MEMBER OF THE LABOR PARTY

"[There] is no official Egyptian initiative. . . . It could be an attempt to drive a wedge between the leaders of the national unity government. . . .

"We do not deal with the PLO and we do not consider it a partner. This organization is a terrorist organization which continues its terrorist acts against Israel and the Arab residents in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza."

FOREIGN MINISTER MOSHE ARENS OF THE LIKUD PARTY

"[The] Shamir plan brought forth the Mubarak plan, and the Mubarak plan will produce the Palestinian state."

KNESSET MEMBER GEULA COHEN OF THE RIGHT-WING TECHIAH PARTY

"Many of us regret the loss of the Jordanian option; and now we should not lose the positive signal coming from Egypt."

RABBI MENACHEM PORUSH OF THE AGUDAT YISRAEL RELIGIOUS PARTY

"[The Egyptian initiative is] a booby trap, . . . and Israel must reject it absolutely."

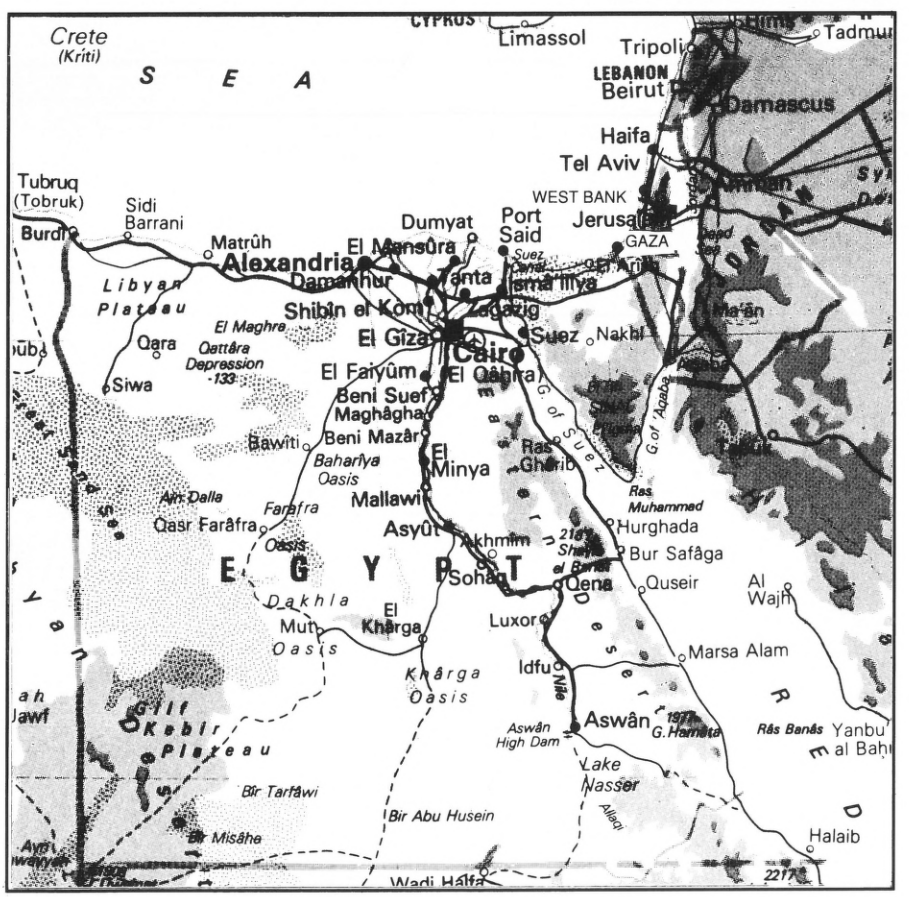
RAPHAEL EITAN, LEADER OF THE EXTREMIST RIGHT-WING TSOMET PARTY, WHICH FAVORS THE "TRANSFER OF ARABS" FROM OCCUPIED PALESTINE TO NEIGHBORING ARAB COUNTRIES

to choose those Palestinians who would take part in any future peace negotiations with Israel. Second, nowhere do the proposals spell out the Palestinian right to self-determination—a key Palestinian demand in any negotiations or peace process. According to one PLO official who was interviewed, *If these 10 points are meant to deal only with the modalities of the elections, we are ready to discuss them. But only if they spell out clearly the role of the PLO to decide on a negotiating party for the Palestinians, and if the right of self-determination is included as an additional point in the plan.*

The PLO official expressed satisfaction that, unlike the Israeli elections plan, the Egyptian 10 points actually do link the question of elections to the principles of a final settlement.

A senior Arab diplomat who wished to remain anonymous said in a background interview that the 10 points were originally concocted as "a face-saving Egyptian response" to the Israeli elections plan. Egypt did not want to show both Israel and the United States that it had rejected the Israeli elections plan, as the PLO had done. And, the diplomat said, Egypt wanted its 10 points to break the stalemate that had developed over the Israeli elections proposal.

The diplomat said that Cairo feared Washington might lose interest in finding a peaceful settlement as a result of the series of setbacks to the U.S.-inspired Israeli



THE EGYPTIAN 10-POINT PEACE PROPOSAL

1. Israel will agree to accept any and all results of the elections.
2. The Israeli army will withdraw from the area of polling places on election day.
3. Israel will be responsible for starting negotiations on the final status of occupied Palestine by a certain and fixed date.
4. Israel will prevent its citizens from entering the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip on election day.
5. Elections will be conducted under international supervision.
6. The elected representatives will enjoy immunity from Israeli occupation laws.
7. Candidates should be free to campaign without Israeli interference.
8. Israel will freeze all settlement activities.
9. All Palestinians of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem will be allowed to vote and run for office.
10. Israel is to declare its acceptance of the four principles which are the basis of U.S. policy in the Middle East— something it has so far refused to do publicly, short of offering them lip service. These four principles are—*(1) the [final peace] settlement will be based on [U.N.] Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338; (2) land will be exchanged for peace; (3) the security of all states in the region will be guaranteed; and (4), the political rights of the Palestinian people will be recognized.*

"EGYPT IS A HEAVYWEIGHT IN THE REGION, AND ITS PIVOTAL ROLE AND INFLUENCE CANNOT BE IGNORED."

❖

elections proposal. Implementation of the Israeli elections plan had become the only object of U.S. diplomacy, and there was no fallback plan in case it failed. "Unfortunately, the U.S. put all of its eggs in only one basket," the senior Arab diplomat explained.

The PLO has been vocal about its criticism of the Bush administration for having placed all its efforts and diplomatic activity exclusively behind the Israeli elections plan. One senior Palestinian official said, *This is why they [the Bush administration] have welcomed the Egyptian proposal. Despite all the resources at its disposal, the administration could not find alternatives after it was snubbed by Israel.*

And although four months had passed since Shamir introduced the Israeli elections proposal, the United States had not been able to exercise any kind of pressure on Israel "to produce the meat" in the elections plan, the Palestinian official added. "What are the modalities of the elections plan? Why has the administration failed to produce its own vision of how the elections should be held and under what conditions? Where is the beef?"

Palestinian officials have publicly expressed fear that the U.S. position is partly prompted by a carefully constructed plan and hidden motives all aimed at giving Israel enough time to suppress the Palestinian peoples' intifada, now approaching the completion of its second year.

Another point of contention that has entered the flurry of diplomatic exchanges in recent weeks, officials here confirmed, is the old question of how to set up a Palestinian delegation to any peace negotiations with Israel. Israel's Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in his visit to Washington last August, reportedly told Secretary of State James Baker that any such Palestinian delegation should include only those Palestinians elected from and currently living in occupied Palestine. The PLO is still insisting, however, that any delegation should include Palestinians from both inside and outside occupied Palestine, and that those from the outside could be named only by the PLO—a demand that Israel also rejects.

A senior Jordanian diplomat who visited Washington in August said in an interview that Jordan supports the PLO proposal to set up a delegation of Palestinians from both inside and outside occupied Palestine. "But," the official was quick to add, "our Jordanian proposal of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, as envisaged two years ago, is still on the table, and is being considered . . . as a way out of the present deadlock on this particular issue."

According to this Jordanian proposal, the official explained, the Palestinian part of the joint delegation would be from both inside and outside occupied Palestine, and those from outside will be named officially by the PLO. Israel is still rejecting this, the official said, although the issue was scheduled to be a subject of extensive discussions at the United Nations in September.

OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

THE WHITE HOUSE WELCOMED THE EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL. ❖

Another complication to the ongoing diplomatic activity might arise over the question of whether Washington would grant a visa to Palestiniam President Yasser Arafat to visit the United Nations in New York. At press time, the general feeling in Washington, among administration officials, Arab diplomats, and Palestinian leaders was that, unlike last year, Arafat would be granted a visa. PLO and Arab officials warn that a denial would automatically trigger—once again—a decision to move the U.N. General Assembly discussions to Geneva—something neither the United Nations secretariat nor other countries would welcome.

In view of the on-again, off-again dialogue between the United States and the PLO in Tunis, it seemed unlikely to all concerned that the Bush administration would embark on yet another negative move. Another negative move could easily have serious repercussions on the elections proposal and the whole peace process in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—where Washington fully realizes that the PLO has the final say. ❖

Raphael Calis is the Washington, D.C. bureau chief of the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). *He is also the former editor of the* Middle East Magazine *in London.*

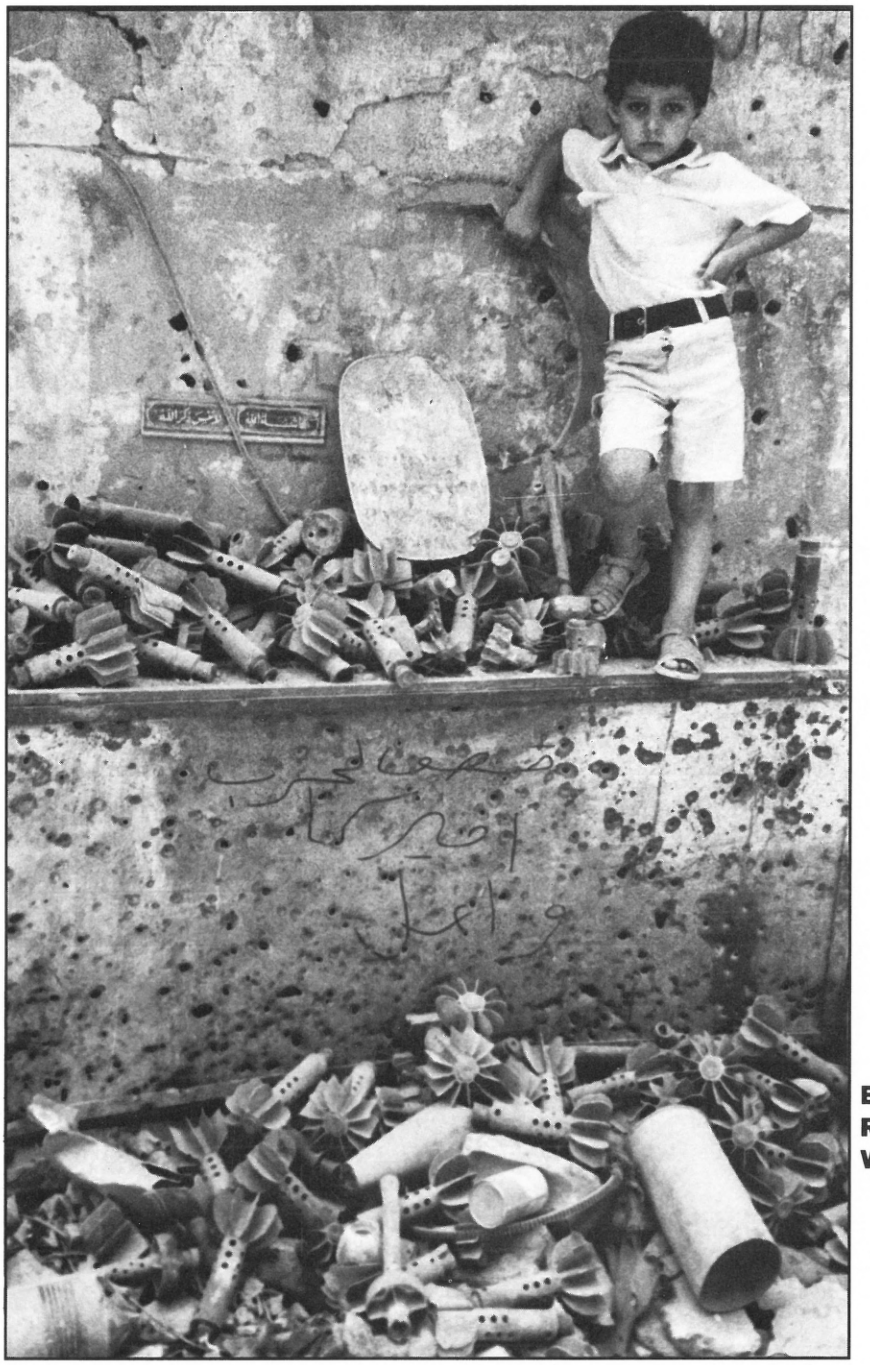


PHOTO: SAID ELATAB/MIDDLE EAST PHOTO

PALESTINIAN CHILD AMIDST EMPTY ARTILLERY SHELLS IN THE SHATILA REFUGEE CAMP.

❖

BY REV. DON E. WAGNER

SABRA AND SHATILA REMEMBERED

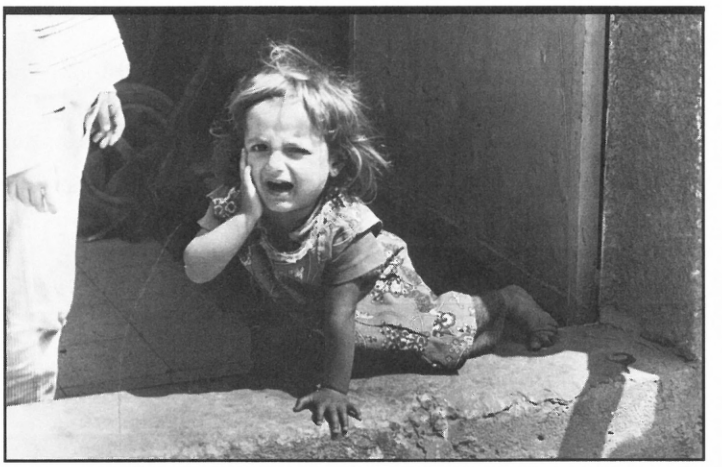
Seven years ago on September 16, Lebanese Phalangist militiamen, with full coordination and support from the Israeli army, began the massacre of between 1,000 to 3,500 Palestinian and Lebanese civilians in Sabra and Shatila

refugee camps in Beirut's southern suburbs. I arrived at the camps on Tuesday, September 21, 48 hours after the massacre ended, still in time to witness Red Cross workers pulling bodies and fragments of bodies from the rubble. Mass graves were dug, and we saw countless corpses lined up for burial. The stench of death was so heavy that relief workers in gas masks gave us handkerchiefs soaked in cologne.

A colleague travelling with me turned and said, "The world must never forget what happened here. These people have not died in vain." But another year has passed with scarcely any mention of the tragedy that took place at Sabra and Shatila. Sadly, in this fast-paced world of 10-second information bites and instantaneous news, the massacre has been forgotten with the long litany of tragedies emanating from Beirut and the Middle East.

Nevertheless, there are compelling reasons for us to reflect on what happened between September 15 and 18, 1982, lest we forget.

On Tuesday, September 14, 1982, Lebanon's president-elect, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated when a massive explosion rocked his Phalangist militia headquarters. Israel, whose troops had been unable to penetrate West Beirut during a nearly three-month seige and bombardment of PLO positions, moved quickly to take over the city. Within 48 hours the Israeli army held all key positions. The Israeli cabinet proudly proclaimed, "The IDF have taken positions in West Beirut to prevent the danger of violence, bloodshed, and anarchy."



PALESTINIAN CHILD IN THE SHATILA REFUGEE CAMP SCREAMING FROM THE SOUNDS OF ARTILLERY SHELLING.

❖

PHOTO: SAID ELATAB/MIDDLE EAST PHOTO

On September 15, at approximately 3:30 a.m., an important meeting took place between Israeli Generals Raphael Eitan (chief of staff) and Amir Drori (head of northern command), and Bashir Gemayel's top military commanders, Fadi Frem and Elie Hobeika. Hobeika was director of intelligence and the key liaison with the Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency. According to later testimony, the militia's entry into the camps was planned at this meeting. Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon confirmed this when he told the Knesset on September 22, 1982, that "The principle of Phalangist entry into the refugee camps was discussed."

According to journalists and residents near Beirut International Airport, Phalangist militiamen began to gather at the airport by mid-afternoon on Thursday, September 16. They were later joined by another Israeli-financed militia, Saad Haddad's South Lebanon Army. At approximately 6 p.m., the first militia entered the southern-most point of Shatila refugee camp under the watchful telescopes of the Israeli army, some 200 yards away atop the seven-story Kuwaiti embassy. From this command post, the Israeli army could see and hear most of the horror to follow.

Also, journalists from *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* discovered the spray-painted direction signs (some in Hebrew) that the Israeli army used to direct the militia toward the camps. By 7 p.m., European and American physicians and nurses working at two hospitals in the camps reported hearing live ammunition, grenades, and screams. Within minutes, they saw the first casualties and, soon after that, a wave of civilians seeking safe refuge entered the hospitals. Hospital workers reported that the sky was brightly lit by Israeli aircraft, which hovered above the camps and dropped enormous flares to assist the right-wing Lebanese militias in their mission.

Later, a survivor told me that on the evening of September 16 her family was about to sit down for dinner when militiamen broke into their home and pulled her elderly father into the street. He was beaten and shot before their eyes. Her younger sister became emotionally distraught at the sight, and the militiamen beat her to death with knives and

guns. One particularly crazed militiaman noticed a gold bracelet on her wrist and a ring on her finger. He took his knife, cut off her hand and finger, and pocketed the jewelry.

Hirsch Goodman, correspondent for the *Jerusalem Post*, saw a cablegram sent at 11 p.m. that evening to the Israeli command from the head of the Phalangist units. The message read simply: "To this time we have killed 300 civilians and terrorists."

By Friday morning, many residents of the camps were in hiding or had fled. Militiamen nonetheless continued the massacre. An Indian physician told me in an interview that on Friday, September 17, militiamen entered Akka Hospital where he was working, killed two Palestinian doctors and gang-raped a nurse before shooting her to death. Palestinian members of the staff gradually tried to escape or go into hiding.

At midday, two Israeli soldiers were filmed outside Sabra refugee camp as a Palestinian mother begged them to stop the massacre. At Shatila refugee camp, a group of fleeing medical workers and refugees told Israeli soldiers about the slaughter, but in both cases the Israelis claimed they could do nothing.

The massacre continued through the evening until late Saturday morning. During this period, Israeli journalists noted Lebanese militiamen coming out of the camps, reporting on their activities, and seeking food and drink before re-entering to resume the massacre. Foreign medical personnel testified to witnessing Palestinian civilians and medical staff being separated from the Lebanese and led away, most of them never to be seen alive again.

Journalists and independent observers were prevented from entering the camps until Sunday morning. Loren Jenkins, *The Washington Post* correspondent, summarized what he saw in an interview with National Public Radio (NPR) on September 20: *It looks like something out of someone's worst dream. Buildings broken, bodies lying in the street, people in alleyways crumbled in great piles. Walls where eight or nine people have been lined up and shot. . . .*

Seeing a family that was shot near a courtyard, obviously the man had come to answer the gate and was shot right there and the woman shot next to him. She still had her dinner plates in her hand. Babies in diapers lay next to them with bullet holes in their heads.

Bodies that have been booby-trapped, grenades placed under them, so when people come back to pick them up, they're going to get killed too. It's a horror. It's just hard to imagine.

NPR's Noah Adams asked Jenkins, "Do you have any doubt now of the complicity of the Israeli Defense Forces' involvement?"

Jenkins replied, *There is no doubt in my mind that Israel aided and abetted the whole operation. These troops were trained by them, they are equipped by them, these men passed through Israeli lines, they set up their command post next to the Israeli command post. They came in and out of the camps. They were fed by the Israeli army, given water between their shooting sprees and went back into the camp* (NPR, September 20, 1982).

Israeli and U.S. officials claimed that they were surprised and shocked that the Lebanese militiamen would do such a thing. Palestinians had expected as much for months, even years. In the September 27, 1982, issue of *Time* magazine, correspondent Robert Suro interviewed a Phalangist officer who told him, "We have been waiting to get in for years." How could the two most sophisticated intelligence communities miss what everyone in the region took for granted, that the Phalangists would massacre Palestinians when given the opportunity?

Continued on page 42

Rev. Don Wagner is director of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in Chicago, Illinois.

A VIEW OF SABRA REFUGEE CAMP. ❖

PHOTO: SAID ELATAB/MIDDLE EAST PHOTO

DRIVING DOWN A DEAD END ROAD

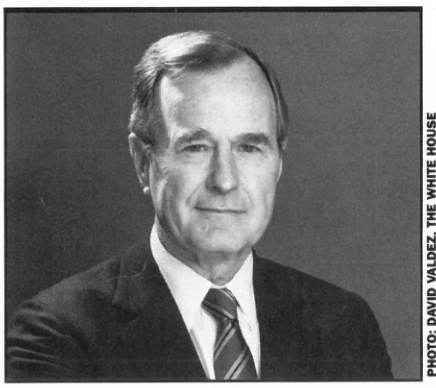


PHOTO: DAVID VALDEZ, THE WHITE HOUSE

U.S. PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH.

U.S. POLICY ON PALESTINE

BY HASSAN ABDUL RAHMAN

Both diplomats and media analysts share feelings of pessimism and frustration when it comes to the so-called Middle East peace process. Many, including observers in Washington with U.S. interests first in mind, believe that U.S. diplomacy is heading down a dead-end road. This does not seem to bother Israel, and thus, it is up to the Palestinians to try to get the United States, and ultimately, the Middle East peace process, back on the road toward peace.❖ There are four main indicators that the Bush administration is driving down a dead-end road. First, the Bush administration has adopted Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's elections proposal in the occupied West bank and Gaza Strip as a cornerstone of U.S. diplomatic efforts in the region. However, administration officials have not enunciated clear answers to key questions about Shamir's elections proposal. Similarly, several U.S. officials ❖

have subscribed to the slogan of "free and democratic elections," but have not actually described the specific means by which free and democratic elections are to be held under the terms of Shamir's proposal.

This leaves Palestinians asking: Exactly why is the Shamir elections proposal so "necessary," when, by definition, freedom and democracy cannot exist under foreign military occupation? Why not end the occupation first? Why not have third-party observers at ballot boxes to make sure that freedom and democracy are being served? Why not allow all Palestinians, including the Palestinians of East Jerusalem and those in prison and exile, vote? Why must the Palestinian people, even before they can vote, accept Shamir's conditions: no elections before ending the intifada, no definite end to the occupation, no removal of settlements, and no independent state?

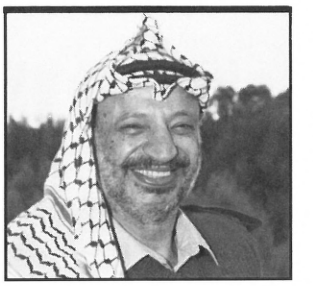
It is our responsibility as concerned Palestinians and concerned Americans not to let the U.S. efforts for peace in the Middle East actually reach the dead end.

The United States must answer these questions if it is serious about promoting freedom, democracy, and peace.

Second, the Bush administration has failed to pinpoint the role of Shamir's elections proposal in a fully thought out peace process. It did not integrate what it considers to be the foundation of peace in the area into a peace plank or step-by-step program. Instead of coming up with a comprehensive plan for freedom, democracy, and peace for *all* the peoples of the region, the Bush administration skirted the issue by claiming that the elections proposal offers a "practical approach," and that all the details should be left to negotiations between "the parties." Thus, without saying anything of serious consequence, the Bush administration relieved itself of having to pressure Israel. And contrary to the image the United States tries to portray of itself, its actions leave the U.S. looking like anything but firm when it comes to advocating peace in the Middle East.

Reluctance to criticize or pressure Israel and the resulting fluidity in U.S. positions is evidenced in U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's recent reversal of positions. Following his critical statements in Washington, D.C. to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) convention and statements in Muscat, Oman on possibly convening an international conference for Middle East peace, Baker was silent for a while. Finally, with the abduction of Lebanon's Hezbollah (Party of God) spiritual leader, Sheikh Obeid, Baker found an opportunity to make up with Israel. He expressed empathy with Israel regarding the abduction.

Third, since it assumed power, the Bush administration has insisted that Shamir's elections plan in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip is an only and indispensable option. No other alternatives have been advanced, although, even by the administration's own assessments, the elections plan is very likely to fail. Thus, with the failure of Shamir's elections plan, the Bush administration may see the failure of all the work it has done in the name of Middle East peace.



PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT YASSER ARAFAT.

❖

And fourth, the Bush administration became nervous and embarrassed when newspapers reported that Palestinian President and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat [Abu Ammar] was contemplating a visit to the United Nations in New York this fall. As of this writing, the administration has not made it clear whether it intends to issue Arafat an entry visa or not. After the United States denied Arafat a visa last year, it only achieved the sorry end of embarrassing itself before the United Nations. All of the political and legal arguments that former Secretary of State George Shultz presented for denying Arafat the visa were quickly found to be baseless. This year, a repeat performance would only make the embarrassment that much greater.

A PLAN OF ACTION

The United States is not expected to admit its diplomatic blunders or its responsibility for failure of the peace process in the Middle East. The United States also believes that Israel is capable of tolerating the cur-

rent level of violence generated by the intifada and attempts to quell it. For those reasons it will seek to lay the responsibility for stagnation of the peace process on the PLO.

The United States will also overlook the Israeli terrorist, oppressive practices against our people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, hoping that domestic public opinion will evolve, as a direct result of Israeli pressure, to demand that the PLO change its position and accept Shamir's elections plan. The United States may also suspend its dialogue with the PLO, without calling it off altogether.

In light of the above prospects, we Palestinians need to formulate a plan of action.

We must intensify contacts and coordination with all groups that can help us achieve our ends—Israeli peace forces and American Jewish groups in particular.

We must activate the European countries, individually and collectively, and to intensify contacts with those countries, to have their parliamentary, executive and grassroots institutions adopt positive stands on the Palestinian issue.

And finally, we must use the United Nations, through both the General Assembly and the Security Council, to pressure the United States to allow President Arafat to address the United Nations. Arafat's presence at the United Nations will give him the opportunity to address U.S. public opinion and represent the Palestinian initiative before the world. And Arafat's presence at the United Nations will ruin attempts to distort the PLO and stall developments toward peace.

Thus, although the United States seems bent on following a course down a dead-end road, it is our responsibility as concerned Palestinians and concerned Americans not to let the U.S. efforts for peace in the Middle East actually reach the dead end.❖

Hassan Abdul Rahman is director or the Palestine Affairs Center in Washington, D.C.

FORCED SOVIET-JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL COMPLICATES THE PEACE PROCESS

FILE PHOTO

BY AMBASSADOR CLOVIS MAKSOUD

AMBASSADOR CLOVIS MAKSOUD AT HIS OFFICE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ❖

The issue of Soviet-Jewish immigration is a matter of grave concern to the Arab states and the Palestinian people. Our particular concern grows from the anticipated consequences that could adversely affect Palestinian rights and the future of peace and stability in the Middle East. ❖ The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service recently decided to limit to 50,000 the number of Soviet Jews to be admitted to the United States in fiscal year 1990. The U.S. State Department also announced plans to shut down processing centers for Soviet emigrés, mostly Jews, in Vienna and Rome, leaving Moscow as the sole location where Soviet emigrés can apply for emigration to the United States. ❖ Under existing procedures, most Soviet emigrés leave with Israeli visas but change their destination to the United States when they reach processing centers in Vienna and Rome. Thus, only 10 to 15 percent of emigrating Soviet Jews end up going to Israel. But because of the new U.S. restrictions on the number of would-be Soviet emigrés to the United States and the closing of the Vienna and Rome processing centers, Soviet emigrés could be flown directly to Israel. ❖ The Israeli government always wanted to have Soviet Jewish

emigrés fly directly to Israel. However, the Israeli government design was blocked by the principle of free choice advocated by the United States and the Helsinki accords and the emigrants themselves. Almost 90 percent of Soviet Jewish emigrants preferred to go to the United States.

What then are the Arab concerns?

First, Soviet Jews might ultimately be forced to go to Israel against their wishes. At the same time, Palestinian refugees in neighboring Arab countries—whose rights of return have been codified by many U.N. resolutions, including the one which gave Israel its birth certificate—are systematically denied the right of return.

Second, the United States is acquiescing to Israel's refusal to ensure that Jewish immigrants will not settle in occupied Palestinian territories. The U.S. action also allows Israel to continue refusing to acknowledge that it is an occupying power.

Third, it follows that illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip are potential centers for receiving such emigrants. Not only are these settlements illegal and, in the judgment of the U.S. government, "obstacles to peace," they are breeding grounds for reckless and extremist vigilantes.

Fourth, the prospect of an induced flow of massive Soviet-Jewish emigration to a borderless Israel at this juncture corroborates all suspicions that Israel's creeping annexation will continue unabated. This threatens the prospects for peace engendered by the resolutions of the Palestine National Council last November.

Now, that* Perestroika *and* glasnost *have enhanced human rights conditions in the Soviet Union, lessening the political motive to emigrate, the dominant reason to leave has become economic incentive.

Fifth, the circuitous attempt to force Soviet-Jewish emigrés to Israel while Israel adamantly rejects a Palestinian homeland in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, let alone the right of Palestinian self-determination, renders a demographic spillover into the occupied Arab territories almost inevitable. The United States, which does not recognize Israel's annexation of Syria's Golan or Palestinian East Jerusalem, cannot guarantee that the new immigrants will not be used to realize Israel's expansionist claims to these lands, let alone the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

When the cold war was at its peak, Israel and its lobby used the treatment of Soviet Jews and Soviet Jewish emigration as a means to attack the Soviet Union on "human rights" issues. And when these Jewish emigrants exercised their option, they overwhelmingly—more than 85 percent—chose to emigrate to the United States.

Now, that *Perestroika* and *glasnost* have enhanced human rights conditions in the Soviet Union, lessening the political motive to emigrate, the dominant reason to leave has become economic incentive. As Irene Shapiro, a Moscow-based lawyer serving as an executive of the Israeli Friendship Association, which promotes the migration of Soviet Jews to Israel, said, *Based on my experience, most Jewish people seeking to leave the Soviet Union want to go to America. But if they have no chance to do that, they will remain in Moscow and Leningrad.*

Now that the Soviet Jewish emigrants' preference for the United States over Israel has been made abundantly clear, Israel and its tireless lobby are pressing in every direction to undermine the Jewish sense of belonging to a liberalized Soviet Union. They are trying to restrict, openly and subtly, by intimidation or legislation, access to any country other than Israel.

At a time when the Palestinian uprising is entering its 22nd month and Israel is increasing and diversifying its oppressive measures, the issue of increased Jewish immigration constitutes a matter of grave concern for the Arab states. For those committed to a just and durable peace in the Middle East, it should be an equally urgent concern.❖

Ambassador Clovis Maksoud is the permanent observer of the League of Arab States at the United Nations and is its chief representative in the United States.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Israelis Shoot and Kill Seven Palestinians in One 24-Hour Period

Seven Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were shot and killed by Israeli soldiers the evening of September 10 and the following morning. At least 20 others were wounded. The seven fatalities were—

NAME	AGE	HOMETOWN	SITE OF WOUND
Zuhair A. Obeid	12	Kfar Qaddoum (Qalqilyah)	neck and abdomen
Mohammad S. Sharab	17	Khan Younis	chest
Mohammad Saba'neh	17	Qabatiyah (Jenin)	abdomen
Maher A. Khalilieh	19	Juba' (Jenin)	head
Samer M. Rummaneh	19	Nablus	head
Fahd A. Ishtuei	20	Kfar Qaddoum	head
Atallah Al-Mashoukhi	21	Rafah (Gaza)	heart

Settlers Attempt to Abduct Seven-Year-Old Girl

A band of Israeli settlers attempted to kidnap a seven-year-old girl in Hebron on September 18. The girl, Sounah Kamal Al-Natsheh suffered a broken arm in the process, and was taken to Alia Hospital. The girl was rescued when bystanders interfered in the abduction attempt.

Two Bethlehem Youngsters Fined 400 Shekels Each

On September 14, two nine-year-olds from Hawsan, a village near Bethlehem, were fined 400 shekels each. According to the Israeli occupation authorities which fined them, they were throwing stones at Israeli army troops.

Killing of Palestinian Children on the Rise

In a September 15 article which appeared in the Israeli daily newspaper *Haaretz*, columnist Ze'ev Schiff disclosed that during the month of August, the number of Palestinian children shot and killed by Israeli gunfire amounted to half the total of all Palestinians killed for that month. Schiff added that those killed are "not masked youths aged 13 to 14 years, but children who are between 5 and 8 years old, and maybe younger."

Israeli Army Adopts More Lenient Rules for Shooting Gaza Youths

On September 14, Israeli military sources in Gaza disclosed that now, after warning masked youths and firing shots in the air, soldiers can shoot at them. Those running away and not heeding orders to stop, even if they are not masked, can also be shot at.

Bethlehem News Service Offices Firebombed

Four molotov cocktails were thrown at the offices of Jawdat Manna's news service office, during the night of September 15. The offices sustained minor property damages estimated to be about $2,500, but no injuries were reported. This was the second such attack on the news service since 1984. To harass Manna's news service in the past, the Israeli occupation authorities had closed his office for four months and cut off its telephone links for one year.

West Bankers to be Issued New Color-Coded ID Cards

Palestinians living in the West Bank will be issued new color-coded identity cards, according to a September 12 article in the Israeli daily newspaper *Yediot Ahronot*. Different colored cards will be issued to identify the exact locality of the bearer's residence. Those with past "criminal offenses or security violations" will be given special identity cards which bar them from entering Israel.

Unlike the cards issued in Gaza, the West Bank cards will not contain a magnetic strip due to the difficulty in controlling the many access points between the West Bank and Israel. The cards will be issued gradually, and Jenin area residents will be the first to receive them.

Gaza Civil Administration Offers Press Cards to Palestinians

The chief of the Israeli civil administration in Gaza has offered to issue press cards to 13 Palestinian journalists, including correspondents of all four of Jerusalem's Arabic-language dailies, according to a September 7 report in

the Israeli daily *Hadashot*. The offer came as a response to Palestinian journalist complaints to Brigadier-General Aryeh Ramot that Israeli soldiers harassed them, obstructed their news-gathering work, and manhandled them. Palestinian journalists, however, declined the offer, saying that cards issued by Palestinian news agencies should be enough for identification purposes.

U.S. Popular Support for Israel May be Waning

U.S. popular support for Israel seemed to fall after the abduction of Sheikh Obeid, according to an August 5 Washington Post/ABC News poll. The poll asked the following question in April and in August:

Q. *Do you think Israel is a reliable ally of the United States—one that can be trusted to cooperate with the United States in almost any circumstance—or not?*

	APRIL	AUGUST
RELIABLE	51%	29%
NOT RELIABLE	46%	53%
NO OPINION	3%	18%

Intifada Hardens Israeli Public Opinion

Support among Israeli citizens for negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization dropped from 37 percent in 1987 to 32 percent in 1989, according to an August report of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies. In a more dramatic shift, 71 percent of Israelis favored security interests over rule of law. There was also a drop in support for an international peace conference from 45 to 37 percent.

On long-term issues, the survey suggests that a growing percentage of Israelis are now willing to trade land for peace and consider an eventual Palestinian state, although in both cases, proponents remain a minority. In August, more Israelis regarded themselves as "hawks" (up from 33.3 percent to 41.4 percent), rather than "doves" (down from 32.5 percent to 31.3 percent).

Overall, the report concluded, the intifada hardened existing opinions. Israelis are more polarized between the "conciliatory left" and the "hard-line right."

South Africa Tests Rocket it Developed Jointly with Israel

On July 5, the South African government announced that it had launched a "test booster rocket." This rocket is believed to be a medium-range ballistic missile developed in cooperation with Israel. Reports appeared some time in June that South Africa was about to test the cooperative effort. Armscor, South Africa's state-owned arms company, said the test was a milestone. The South African missile, a version of Israel's Jericho II, can be used to launch spy satellites as well as to deliver the nuclear warheads South Africa has developed with Israeli help.

Lesotho to Purchase Civil Defense Training from Israel

Lesotho, a country totally surrounded by South Africa, will be getting Israeli training in "civil defense." Lesotho has just acquired Israeli military vehicles worth $560,000. And for over a year, Israel has had maintenance and training agreements with the country's national airline.

China

Fearful of jeopardizing its enormous arms trade with China, Israel hesitated for three weeks before protesting the killing of demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens expressed "shock" over the loss of life, and said that Israel "favored" the way student demonstrators had raised their demands for democracy. The current Chinese crackdown has put a damper on the non-military aspects of Israeli-Chinese relations, which had been developing at a quickening pace. ❖

THE IMPACT OF THE INTIFADA ON ISRAEL'S ECONOMY

BY
NABIL E. KUKALI

PHOTO COURTESY OF IZHAR BE'ER

RAISING SHEEP IN HEBRON TO MEET LOCAL DEMANDS FOR MILK AND MEAT.

❖

During the 20 years that preceded the intifada, Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory was lucrative. In fact, "the territories" were like the goose that laid the golden eggs: Israel's profits from its occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were close to $1 billion a year.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip had become a primary market for Israeli exports, especially consumer items. That market was distinguished by its proximity to the sites of production. The resulting low shipping costs allowed Israeli producers to reap a sizeable profit. Moreover, the Israeli military authorities generated income from the various taxes levied on production, sales, and personal income. The Israeli occupation authorities also collected fees from the residents in return for issuing permits and licenses to run their daily affairs.

Israeli economist Simcha Bahiri best described Israel's economic domination of the West Bank and Gaza. He stated that, *Israel uses the same methods in the Occupied Territories that the old colonialists used to exploit sources of production and open up markets for commodities that the colonial power produced in the colonies, in addition to the expropriation of land and exploitation of water resources, and building settlements in the colonized areas.*

This situation prevailed until the beginning of the intifada, which upset all standards and norms. The intifada created a new economic reality.

This is not to claim that the intifada can be credited for all the crises that the Israeli economy is undergoing at present. Many crises stem from the inadequacies of the Israeli economic structure itself. For instance, Israel suffers from one of the highest rates of per capita foreign debt and per capita military expenditure. Together, these pose a huge strain on any country—especially a small one. Relative to its gross national product, Israel also suffers from inflation.

But the intifada exploded at a critical stage in the development of Israel's economy. The Israeli government was striving to trim the national budget, and in turn, cut back on expenditures. It was also trying to increase exports and decrease the rate of monetary inflation. The Israeli economy had reached a stage where it was almost surmounting its acute difficulties. In 1987, there was a relative improvement in the domestic rate of growth, estimated at 27 percent in current prices, or 4.6 percent in real terms. The annual increase in living

expenses had also dropped from 44.5 percent in 1984 to 18.6 percent in 1985, and had risen slightly to 19.7 percent in 1986. This rate stabilized at 16.1 percent in 1987, signalling the end of hyper-inflation and the return to normal inflationary rates.

Israeli exports had increased, reaching $18.2 billion (up 18.5 percent), and Israel's foreign currency reserves increased by 28.4 percent. The Israeli shekel was maintaining relative stability vis-a-vis the U.S. dollar. The rate of its devaluation was only 7 percent. With regard to Israel's trade balance, the deficit had increased from $2.4 billion in 1986 to $3.2 billion in 1987 (up 33 percent).

Thus, in 1987, one goal was reached: namely, inflation was arrested. But the decrease in the trade deficit was not fully realized. The intifada coincided with the attempt to decrease the trade deficit, creating new crises and exacerbating the economic problems of the time. Former Israeli Minister of Economy Gad Yaacobi said: "Like it or not, the intifada became a key factor in influencing economic developments in Israel." London's *Financial Times* reported that the Israeli economy is being destroyed by the intifada in occupied Palestine. It warned that in the long-run the economy will be exposed to even more damage due to the instability and the lack of confidence the intifada have generated.

Indicators of economic recession in Israel began to surface clearly about 18 months ago, when direct government intervention became inevitable to correct the inherent defects in the Israeli economy.

The Economic Indicators

Today the Israeli economy is passing through one of its worst stages since 1982. The gross national product does not exceed 1 percent. In 1987, it was 5 percent. The rate of capital investments in 1988 dropped by 20 percent, and personal savings remained at relatively low levels.

Despite the strict monetary policies manifested in the 15 percent devaluation of the Israeli shekel, a $750 million cutback in the national budget (2 percent of the estimated total expenditure), and the lifting of government subsidies on various products and commodities, the Israeli government has not been able to avert the rise in prices or hold inflation to the expected 10 percent range.

> ***"Like it or not, the intifada became a key factor in influencing economic developments in Israel."***
>
> **—GAD YAACOBI**

Below, data on the economic recession and various economic indicators are given as reported by the Israel Central Statistics Bureau, Israeli industry officials, and the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv.

Losses to Inflation

During the month of July, prices in Israel rose by 139 points, with base year 1987 being 100. The average monthly income required by an urban family to meet basic needs was 2,480 shekels last month.

The rate of inflation during the first half of this year indicates that the annual rate of inflation will reach 25 percent. The consumer price index also increased by 20.1 percent during the 12 months that ended last June. The rate of inflation in July was the highest during the past three years. And in 1988, the consumer price index went up by only 0.3 percent. In June 1987, it rose by 1 percent.

In the second quarter of 1989, the consumer price index increased by 4.7 percent, compared with only 4.2 percent in the same period last year.

Losses to Increased Unemployment

Unemployment topped 9 percent in Israel this year, with some 140,000 unemployed persons, compared with only 85,000 in the same period last year. The unemployment rate among women was 10.4 percent in the first quarter of this year, compared with 8 percent in the preceding quarter.

Unemployment surged in development towns in the past year by 23.5 percent, but signs of even worse unemployment rates were evident in one town, Migdal HaEmek, and in the north and south. In June of this year, 49,000 unemployed persons received unemployment benefits, as compared with 23,000 a year ago. The national insurance establishment paid unemployment checks worth 25 million shekels, compared

with only 15 million shekels in June 1988.

Losses in Government Revenues

Government revenue dropped by 100 million shekels in each of the past two months. The head of the Israeli tax authority said that government revenue this year will be less than last year's by around 1.5 billion shekels. The major economic sectors in Israel have also witnessed a slowing economic pace, and Israel's revenue from taxes during June 1989 was 2 billion shekels, a drop of 16 percent from June 1988.

WORKING TOGETHER TO LESSEN RELIANCE ON ISRAELI PRODUCTS.

❖

PHOTO: A. KELER-S. BINOVIC

Losses to the TradE Deficit

Israel's exports dropped by 3.4 percent, contributing to a 5 percent increase in Israel's trade deficit during the first five months of this year. Israel's trade deficit totaled $1.14 billion.

Losses to Wages

Average wages have dropped by 1.6 percent in the first quarter of this year compared with the same period last year, and by 7.4 percent compared with the last quarter of 1988.

Losses to Falling Consumption

A significant drop in personal consumption is evident. Car sales dropped by 50 percent, electric and household appliances by 38 percent, and foodstuffs and apparel by 4 percent. This means that the standard of living has, in effect, dropped.

Losses to Bad Checks

The average value of bad checks was 30,000 shekels a day this year. The number of closed accounts, according to the Bank of Israel roster, rose by 250 percent, compared with 18 months ago. The delay in settling payment of bad checks will no doubt adversely affect the monetary circulation of Israeli banks, and could result in a liquidity crisis.

Losses to Shrinking Area of Planted Land

The area of planted land has shrunk because hundreds of agricultural cooperatives and villages are experiencing financial crises. Agricultural output has dropped by 15 percent compared with 1988, and exports fell by 23 percent, compared with 1987.

Losses to a Rise in Public Spending

No doubt, the outbreak and endurance of the intifada have increased the expenditures of the Israeli Ministries of Defense and Police, which have been entrusted with quelling the uprising and restoring "stability" in occupied Palestine.

The U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv estimates that the direct outlays of both ministries add up to $120 million each month, in addition to indirect expenditures of $38 million a month. The total expenditures during 20 months of unrest are estimated at 3.16 billion shekels.

Losses to Palestinian Labor Absenteeism

According to official Israeli figures before the intifada, the number of workers in Israel from occupied Palestine totalled around 110,000. The average monthly pay for Palestinian workers was equal to $300, about 40 percent of what the Israeli laborer would be paid for a similar job. Thus, each year Israel was able to save $647 million in wages to Palestinian workers.

But due to the intifada—the "need" to impose curfews and military sieges, and the large number of Palestinians who stopped working inside Israel—labor absenteeism has reached 30 percent. A Hebrew University professor estimated that if all Palestinian workers in occupied Palestine did not report to their jobs in Israel, the loss to Israel's economy could climb as high as $1.5 billion. And, if the number of actual hours worked by Palestinians is deducted from this total, the loss to Israel's economy would be in the neighborhood of $600 million.

Palestinian worker absenteeism in Israel has led to a significant

drop in Israel's revenue because of a drop in taxes and other payroll deductions collected. This income fell by 30 percent, or $194 million annually.

Losses to the Construction Industry

The total number of construction workers in Israel at the end of 1988 was around 80,000, of whom 50,600 came from the West Bank and Gaza. Because of the labor-intensive character of this sector, the losses to the construction industry from the continued intifada and absence of Palestinian workers have been exacerbated. Construction work has dropped by 25 percent, with a concommitant 20 percent fall in construction investments, compared to the pre-intifada period. In addition, a number of construction projects have been delayed, adding millions of dollars to the cost of construction.

Palestinian labor absenteeism also led to a rise in construction costs, and a 15 to 20 percent increase in the prices of homes. As a result of the drop in the number of Palestinian construction workers, the direct and indirect losses to the construction sector are estimated by the head of the Israeli contractors' union to reach $16 million a month, or a cumulative amount of $320 million since the start of the 20-month intifada.

Losses to the Industrial Sector

Israel's industry has faced tremendous losses due to the Palestinian workers' moratorium and the boycott of Israeli goods by West Bankers and Gazans. Five percent of industrial workers are Palestinians, who constitute 50 percent of the textile and foodstuff manufacturing workforce. Their work stoppage has caused a significant drop in industrial output, so much so that some textile factories, such as *Israel Looms,* and food plants, like *Elite* and *Osem*, have had to substantially cut back production. Not only have the work stoppages hurt these industries, but sales of Israeli industrial exports to occupied Palestine have dropped significantly as a direct consequence of the Palestinian boycott.

These intifada-initiated adverse repercussions have affected some 3,400 Israeli companies whose financial difficulties have been exacerbated by the plummeting demand for their products. This represents a 40 percent increase in the number of companies in financial trouble, many of which have had to dismiss a large number of their workers and employees, according to a study by the Bank of Israel. Officials at the Ministry of Trade and Industry have linked such developments to the shrinking demand for Israeli-manufactured goods from residents of the West Bank and Gaza.

Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Trade and Industry Yoram Blizovsky admitted that Palestinians purchased $250 million worth of Israeli goods in 1988, compared with goods worth $850 million they purchased each year before. This means that the intifada's boycott of Israeli goods has shrunk the annual volume of Palestinian purchases by approximately $600 million.

Blizovsky pointed out that tremendous losses have hit some Israeli industrial sectors, especially textiles and foodstuffs. This has resulted in real industrial production drops ranging from 2.2 percent to 2.5 percent.

Losses to the Israeli industrial sector in the last year of the intifada have been estimated at $1.5 billion.

Losses to the Agricultural Sector

The losses to the agricultural sector have stemmed primarily from fires and work stoppages.

Fires have devastated some 150,000 dunums, of which 30,000 dunums is forest land, and 120,000 dunums is pasture land. No official figures on the losses have been provided, but estimated losses due to replanting spoiled crops have been placed at $24 million.

Further exacerabating this problem is the fact that Palestinian farm workers constitute around 30 percent of the total agricultural labor force—mostly concentrated in areas of picking and packing. Agricultural exports have had to be delayed, and some producers have had to ship by air to make up time needed to honor their sales contracts. Besides, Palestinian residents have boycotted Israeli agricultural produce. All

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE INTIFADA, MORE PALESTINIANS ARE TILLING THEIR LAND. ❖

PHOTO: A. KELER-S. BINOVIC

those factors led to heavy losses to the Israeli agriculture industry. The French daily newspaper, *Le Figaro*, noted in a dispatch from Israel on June 24, 1989, that the agricultural sector has been hurt by recession and farmers' debts in the billions of dollars

Losses to the Tourism Industry

Another economic sector that has been damaged by the intifada is tourism. The intifada has had a negative psychological impact on would-be tourists. The Israeli daily *Al-Hamishmar* reported on August 1, 1989, that the Dutch Foreign Ministry has warned travel agencies that organize tours and visits to Israel that the Dutch tourists should not visit occupied Palestine and East Jerusalem, due to the perils created by the intifada.

Tourism netted Israel around $2 billion in 1987, so the losses from dwindling tourism have been estimated at $1.6 billion during the 20 months of the intifada.

Losses to the The Transportation Sector

During the intifada, losses to the Egged Bus Transportation Company have been estimated at $4.9 million, due to damages inflicted on its fleet in Palestinian cities, towns, villages, and refugee camps. As for the losses incurred on settler buses and cars, due to damages and additional expenses for communications equipment and the installation of protective screens and shields, no estimates or figures are available.

Losses to a Drop in Tax Receipts

Israel's revenues from taxes collected in occupied Palestine in 1988 were expected to reach $200 million, but because of the tax boycott, during the 20 months of the intifada, losses close to $260 million were incurred. The majority of Palestinians have thus complied with the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) directive to withhold tax payments.

Losses in Foreign Investments

Israeli sources have asserted that the "disturbances" in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have led to a 28 percent drop in foreign investments. The daily *Yediot Ahronot* reported that many U.S. banks have refrained from providing additional medium-range loans to Israeli establishments since the end of 1988. Many foreign depositors have also withdrawn their funds from Israeli banking institutions. The investors often cite increased risks due to the intifada as the reason for their hesitancy.

Losses in the Stock Exchange

The slow pace of production and sales has caused losses and triggered doubts about the future of the Tel Aviv stock exchange. The share prices of registered Israeli firms have dropped, and the Tel Aviv stock exchange has registered a 23.5 percent decline in the prices of shares. The intifada was a key factor in this decline. Losses due to the stock exchange fall are estimated at $1.275 billion.

Losses to Reduced Issuances of Exit Permits

Due to the deteriorating security situation, long curfew periods, and Israeli measures restricting monetary amounts that can be brought into occupied Palestine from abroad, and according to data provided by several agencies that operate at the bridges across the Jordan River, the number of travellers to Israel via those points has fallen by 60 percent. That means a drop in customs and financial revenue to Israel, collected from fees paid by travellers leaving and entering Israel and the occupied West Bank and Gaza. The shortfall is estimated at $26 million.

Conclusion

In brief, the Palestinian intifada has created difficult problems for Israel's economy. Israel has incurred economic losses and costs, estimated at a minimum of $8.9 billion, or $445 million a month. Those losses and additional costs have affected the public and private sectors, as well as the Histadrut. And although the economic question is complex and intricate, Israel must extricate itself from this economic crisis politically, because the political situation affects the economic conditions the most. ❖

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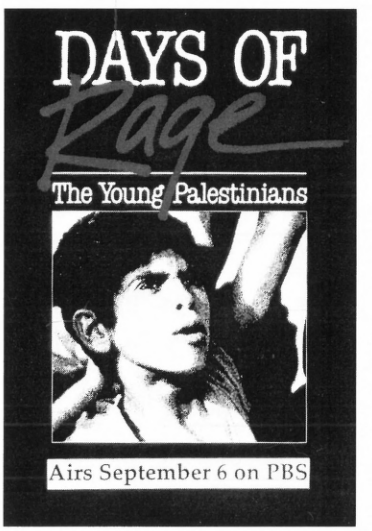
THE RAGE OVER DAYS OF RAGE

SHAME ON PBS

BY JOHN LAW



PROMOTIONAL POSTER FOR THE "DAYS OF RAGE" DOCUMENTARY SHOWN SEPTEMBER 6 ON PBS. ❖

Just when so many people were thinking that the intifada had made the American media more tolerant of the Palestinian cause, along came *Days of Rage.* It turned out that this documentary about the intifada produced more heat than light and more outrage than understanding. ❖ In the film, its American producer, Jo Franklin-Trout, tried to depict in factual terms the rage that Palestinians feel after 22 years of Israeli occupation. Many Americans who had seen it in private showings believed she had succeeded. But when it was announced earlier this year that it would be aired nationally on public television, a campaign to kill it got underway. Those who wanted the documentary dead—people both in and out of the media—used a variety of weapons. ❖ These included attempts at character assassination, such as the published comment by William E. Rapfogel of the Jewish National Committee, in which he said that Franklin-Trout—a former producer of the prestigious MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour—"served other masters" in disregard of "this country's fundamental freedoms, which Franklin-Trout would sell to the Saudis for her next docudrama." ❖ The media also published a myriad of unsubstantiated accusations that she had "secretly" received Arab government funding for the film through the Arab American Cultural Foundation (AACF), which had in turn exerted

"editorial control." Both these accusations—which if true would have violated the guidelines of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and caused it to break its agreement to broadcast the film—were denied by Franklin-Trout and by Georgetown University Professor Hisham Sharabi, the chair of AACF. Sharabi says "there was no funding given for the film and there was no editorial control of any kind." Spokesmen for PBS also said that PBS had made its own investigation into the allegations and found no reason to cancel the broadcast.

These disclaimers did nothing to calm the journalistic waters. By the day the film was finally scheduled to be shown, September 6, the controversy had broadened considerably. B'nai B'rith had distributed a 5,000-word "viewer's guide" to warn of the "manipulations that permeate" the film. And on that very morning, a story by Phil McCombs of *The Washington Post* said: *The whole imbroglio has come, by now, to focus as much attention on questions of journalistic ethics and methods as on the Palestine question. Who is this Jo Franklin-Trout who goes off to the Middle East to put a human face on the intifada? How does she get the film on national television? Where did she get the $183,500 needed to make it? Is she hooked into the Arab community? Is anybody watching over all this to ensure the public gets something like a straight story?*

By this time, *Days of Rage* was still alive, but already badly maimed. Put on the defensive by criticism in the media and by protests from its own funders, PBS had decided not to run the film by itself, but to surround it with two PBS-produced films that would provide a different slant, and to add a panel discussion. This program would no longer be called *Days of Rage,* but would be changed to *Intifada: The Palestinians and Israel.* One of the PBS films would come first, to be followed by *Days of Rage,* which would then be followed by the second film and the panel discussion. This additional material was referred to as a "wrap-around."

Franklin-Trout's attempts to present a point of view without going to extremes appeared to be unappreciated by PBS.

The program began with a spoken preface, also scrolled in printed form on the screen, referring to recent allegations in the magazine *The New Republic*, that *Days of Rage* violated PBS funding guidelines. But then the preface went on to reaffirm that PBS had investigated the allegations and found no basis for cancelling the broadcast. Why, if PBS came to this conclusion, did it feel necessary to make such an announcement at all?

After the preface came a brief introduction by former State Department spokesman Hodding Carter, now working as a journalist, and then the first of the "wrap-around" segments. It was a 10-minute film produced by PBS to straighten out what it claims are distortions in *Days of Rage's* account of the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. But what it really did was add some hoary Israeli myths, masquerading as "facts," to *Days of Rage's* brief introductory description of the historical background—a description that is over-simplified but also commendably unemotional and free of any *Palestinian* myths.

In fact, Franklin-Trout appeared to have leaned over backward to provide a chronology of the major events without saying anything that would enflame partisans of Israel. But she got no credit for it from either PBS or most of the panelists in the discussion that closed the program. One of the panelists complained bitterly at the capsule description of what happened after Israel proclaimed itself a state in 1948: "war broke out." Apparently he thought that Franklin-Trout did not make it clear enough that the war was all "the fault of the Arabs." However, Franklin-Trout could well have pointed out—but did not—that Israeli troops had already been attacking and capturing Palestinian villages during the months that preceded the declaration of their state.

Another example of the "sanitization" of any history that might provoke the hostility of some viewers was the mini-description of the aftermath of the 1948 war: "[It left] hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees displaced in camps." Apparently, Franklin-Trout deemed it safer not to explain just how they became "displaced," and no panelist raised the point.

In contrast to the bland content and tone of Franklin-Trout's historical chronology, the narrator of the "wrap-around" film designed to "correct" that segment of *Days of Rage* bombarded viewers with a succession of myths, distortions, and

inaccuracies. For example, the narrator said that the events of the intifada "raise shadows of Auschwitz and Treblinka"—repeating a 40-year-old slander by Israeli propagandists that Palestinians in the Middle East are somehow linked with the mass slaughter of Jews perpetrated by Nazis in Europe.

The narrator also declared that "terrorism is Israel's form of crime in the streets—an everyday menace." Aside from exaggerating the frequency of terrorist acts, he cited as a "ghastly example" the 16 bus passengers who were killed last July when a Palestinian caused it to plunge into a ravine. This was indeed a horrible event, but it was not an "example" of terrorism. The police determined that it was a crazed act of lethal violence stemming from hate and rage, carried out by a man seeking personal revenge for violence that had been committed against his own family and friends by the Israeli occupation authorities. Terrorism, on the other hand, is lethal violence organized by a group, deliberately and for political purposes, and specifically designed to intimidate in order to achieve these purposes. To label every act of murder, however heinous, as "terrorism" does not help people understand what is really happening in the Middle East.

Some of this wrap-around was just plain tricky—such as the showing of huge crowd scenes of *Iranian* demonstrators as an example of the dangers demonstrations in the West Bank and Gaza pose to Israel. Or how about the omission of small but essential links in the chronological chain—such as saying that in 1967, Jordan's attack on Israel led to Israel's counterattack, which led to the occupation of the West Bank, even though it was actually Israel's attack on Egypt that began the chain? It would also be news to Jordan's King Hussein to hear that when he undertook his defense treaty obligations to Egypt at that time by firing his guns at Israel, "his declared aim was liquidating the state of Israel.

Therefore, it came as no surprise that PBS would also include a remark about Arabs trying to drive Jews "into the sea," as well as a litany of complaints about how "narrow" Israel is now. The anonymous narrator conceded that "a few military experts" argue that the West Bank is not needed for security, but he came down on the side of "Israel's leaders," who he said are "convinced that their history warns against taking risks with their hard-won security." The fact is that there are far more than just "a few" military and other leaders in Israel and around the world who believe that in an age of ultrasonic jet aircraft, missiles, and long-range artillery, it hardly matters whether the "waist" of your country is nine miles wide or 14 miles wide.

After the end of this wrap-around, Carter announced that *Days of Rage*, produced by Jo Franklin-Trout, was coming up next. He declared, "This is *her* view of the intifada." (The emphasis is his.)

Why didn't Carter make the same point about the wrap-around film? Surely it represented the view of the person who produced it? But alas, we were not even told who that person was, since it appeared without any credits. This is not exactly even-handed. To find out if there were ever going to be any credits, a viewer had to wait to the very end of the two-and-one-half hour program—until after the showing of *Days of Rage*, after the second wrap-around, after the panel discussion, and even after a repetition of the explanatory note that had introduced the program. Relatively few people probably waited that long, but I did. Finally, there it was, rolling down the screen: Background Reports: Producer/Director, Alan Rosenthal, Supervising Editor, Lawrence Solomon, followed by a long listing of editorial and production credits. Wouldn't it have been fair for PBS to have publicized who the creators of this film were, in order to allow the media to check into their backgrounds as thoroughly as was done in the case of Jo Franklin-Trout?

THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH

A Viewer's Guide*

to

"Days of Rage: The Young Palestinians"

I N T R O D U C T I O N

On September 6, 1989, public television affiliates around the country will air "Days of Rage: The Young Palestinians," a 90-minute film about the Palestinian uprising against Israel known as the "*intifada*." According to writer, producer and director Jo Franklin-Trout, the film is intended to be a "look into the realities that led to the rebellion."

The reality of "Days of Rage," however, is very different. The film is not objective jounalism, and it does not present a fair and balanced examination of the origins and continuing *intifada*, while contrasting fully-armed Israeli soldiers with unarmed Palestinian women and children. The intent is to create the image of Israel as a brutal nation pitting its army against a defenseless populace. Conveniently avoided by the eye of the camera are the lethal weapons of the uprising—knife blades, lead pipes and Molotov cocktails. At the same time, Franklin-Trout is highly selective in what she brings to the screen. The murderous threats of the Palestine Liberation Organization or Islamic Jihad are nowhere to be seen. Absent are the bodies of Palestinians murdered by PLO hit squads

A "VIEWER'S GUIDE" PREPARED BY ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH TO DISCREDIT THE DOCUMENTARY, *DAYS OF RAGE*.

❖

After Carter emphasized that *Days of Rage* was "*her* view," he informed viewers that it has "been criticized as a Palestinian tract, and that "the only Israelis who appear are from one extreme or the other—the hawks or the doves. There are no representatives of the Israeli mainstream." He then added gratuitously that while what is said in the film is "discomfiting in part," it is "also oddly reassuring—if it is true—in that it suggests some movement away from the historic call for Israel's destruction, and toward coexistence."

If Hodding Carter does not know if it is true that there has been a movement toward coexistence, which is represented by the two-state solution, where has he been since the Algiers and Geneva conferences of last year? In fact, where has he been for the past 15 years? This is carrying "even-handedness" much too far, to the point of phoniness.

Hodding Carter's remark about the lack of representation for the "Israeli mainstream," with only hawks and doves being interviewed on screen, also made little sense. *Days of Rage* was not supposed to be a film about Israel or about the Arab-Israeli conflict, but simply about the Palestinian people of the West Bank and Gaza, and how they cope with the rage fostered by a foreign occupation. Relatively few Israelis spend much time in the West Bank—where the cameras were most of the time—except for soldiers and settlers and occasional doves like retired Generals Mattiyahu Peled and Yehoshafat Harkabi, who were interviewed more extensively than anyone else and did not seem to fit the "extremist" label given to them by Hodding Carter.

The fifth panelist was Alan Keyes, who could have made even Yitzhak Shamir or Ariel Sharon sound "soft on Israel."

A reporter on the panel which followed, Walter Ruby of the *Jerusalem Post*, even called them "extreme left." This seems an odd label to give to people who are Zionists, who believe in Israel's 1967 borders, and who are neither anarchists nor communists, yet who are convinced that the key to peace lies in allowing the Palestinians a small state of their own, under internationally enforced guarantees, in what amounts to less than one quarter of Palestine. If Ruby is looking for an "extreme leftist" on the issue of the Palestinians he might talk to Israel's Natura Karta bloc or other ultra-Orthodox Jews who believe that at this time there should not even be a state of Israel at all. Many Israelis who believe the same things as Peled and Harkabi would consider themselves moderates, and a moderate ought by almost every definition be part of the "mainstream." On the other hand, many would argue that these days there are no mainstreamers in Israel—only doves or hawks, as was the case in the United States during the Vietnam war. By the time that war was coming to an end, there appeared to be more doves than hawks. In Israel, however, hawks appear to be in the majority today.

Last spring, a CBS/*New York Times* poll taken within Israel reported that 70 percent of Israelis believed the Arabs would commit a holocaust against Israeli Jews if given a chance, and 82 percent believed the PLO had not made enough concessions to warrant the opening of negotiations. Are these the people that Hodding Carter and some of his panelists would regard as mainstream? If they had appeared on screen, would they really have given a more favorable impression to Americans of their willingness to negotiate a just peace? Would they have said anything much different from what the Israeli hardline settler Daniella Weiss said on camera? And would the ones who gave an opposite point of view to the American pollsters have sounded so different from Peled or Harkabi?

The fact is that the views and positions of the extremist "right-wing" element in Israel could have been played up a great deal in this film, as a way of gaining sympathy for the Palestinian cause. Anyone creating a propaganda tract would have tried to do so. But Franklin-Trout chose not to do so, preferring not to be provocative. She may have gone too far in this direction, however. In this film there is not even a reference to such people as the racist Rabbis Meir Kahane and Moshe Levinger, who would like to rid the occupied West Bank and Gaza of all Palestinians. Even the euphemism "transfer" is a word often used in the Israeli "mainstream."

Nor is there any mention of the infamous Ariel Sharon, a minister in the coalition (mainstream?) government. Where are the words of Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, of the Labor (mainstream?) party, calling

for "force, power, beatings" and the "iron fist"? For that matter, where are the scenes of Israeli soldiers holding down and deliberately breaking the bones of teenagers, on order of the defense minister? Even though the producer's camera crew was not on hand to film any bone-breaking, there are other available film clips which could have been used. Clearly, Jo Franklin-Trout was being more "even-handed" than she had to be.

Franklin-Trout's attempts to present a point of view without going to extremes appeared to be unappreciated by PBS because, after the showing of *Days of Rage,* viewers were given another PBS-produced wrap-around film on a subject which, as Hodding Carter told the viewers, Franklin-Trout's film does not go into. As he explained it, "You're left wondering what sort of effect the human rights issues have had on the Israeli side." Frankly, I was left wondering why such an issue would be expected to be covered in a film that is essentially about how Palestinians are coping. When we saw films of London civilians being bombed during World War II, did we Americans begin wondering what sort of effect those human rights actions were having on German pilots?

In any case, viewers were treated to a film in which various Israelis expressed their "worry about the moral decline in the level of the our soldiers, I am afraid about what this is doing to us." A soldier is shown saying, "I feel terrible" about some of the brutalities he has avowedly committed. The advocate general of the Israeli army says on camera that the "rule of law is absolutely applied to everybody—whether local inhabitants of the area, soldiers, settlers, and so forth." Aside from his dubious inference that the rule of law has had a meaningful impact on military behavior in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, he fails to mention that while soldiers and settlers are governed by Israeli law, the Palestinian inhabitants are governed by emergency regulations that permit indefinite imprisonment without charges, as well as expulsion, house demolition, and even—as confirmed by Israel's Landau Commission—torture.

This last wrap-around was followed by the panel discussion, moderated by Hodding Carter, who introduced what he called "a distinguished panel—five Americans representing a range of well-informed viewpoints on the Middle East conflict. It was probably just as well that the truth did not have to be subjected to a majority vote, because—despite some earlier, rather naive statements by PBS officials that they would put together a panel of "neutral (manifestly impossible) experts"— they ended up with a panel holding a range of preconceived views that on balance tilted toward Israel. Furthermore, not all of them could be said to be "well-informed" on the matters at hand.

One of the panelists was Seymour Reich, chair of the Council of Presidents of Major American-Jewish Organizations. Another was James J. Zogby, executive director of the Arab American Institute. Reich is surely not as "well-informed" on the Arab-Israeli conflict as Zogby is, but not surprisingly each reflected the perspective of his own organization, and in terms of quantity, if not quality, they balanced each other off.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs Richard W. Murphy kept his view on the issues almost entirely to himself as he focused on the pressing "need for negotiations." He could not be put into either the "pro" or "anti" column of the broader discussion. So far, it was even.

The fourth panelist was Walter Ruby, a Washington correspondent for the Tel Aviv-based *Jerusalem Post.* It was clear that he was trying to be fair on the issues, although both his biases and the limited extent of his expertise were showing when he made the statement "It's time for the Palestinians to come forward and say that they are prepared to talk with Israel and to live in peace side by side." He also acknowledged he was "speaking from a Jewish perspective." Score another tilt toward the Israeli side, but it wouldn't have mattered even if he'd scored as "neutral."

The fifth panelist was Alan Keyes, a former assistant secretary of state for international organizational affairs, and former ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, who could have made even Yitzhak Shamir or Ariel Sharon sound "soft on Israel." His alleged qualification for being "well-informed" on the Arab-Israeli conflict, according to Hodding Carter, was that he "was a veteran of many battles over Middle East issues at the U.N." Well, a few debates (over eco-

Continued on page 42

John Law is a former Middle East bureau chief for U.S. News and World Report *and founder of the* Washington Report on the Middle East Affairs. *He also serves on the editorial board of* The Return.

THE HISTADRUT

Israel's Racist Labor Federation

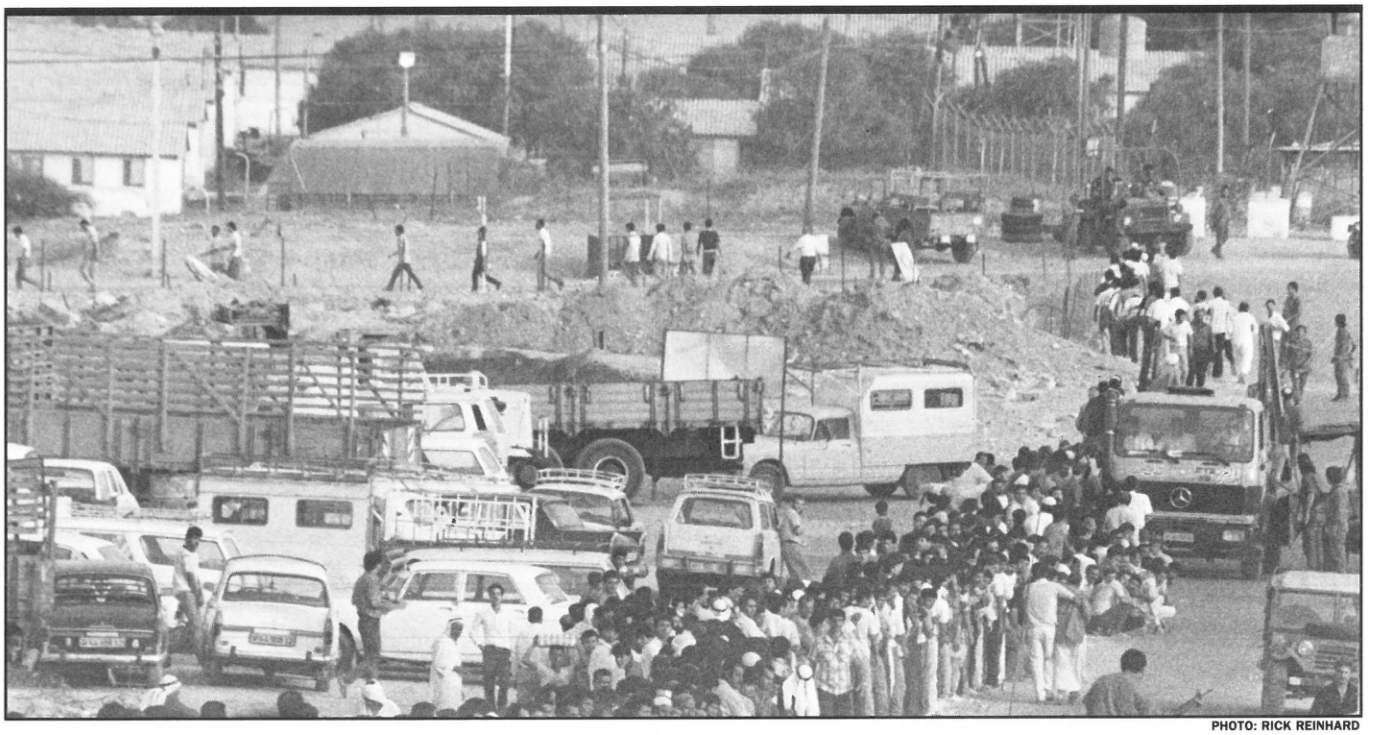


PHOTO: RICK REINHARD

BY MITCHELL KAIDY

PALESTINIAN LABORERS, UNPROTECTED BY THE HISTADRUT OR ANY OTHER ISRAELI LABOR INSTITUTION, MUST LINE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING IN GAZA TO FIND WORK IN ISRAEL.

❖

It is a union that collects millions of dollars in dues, yet negotiates no benefits for an entire class of workers. It prevents workers from joining it based on their national origin. It is a labor federation that hires and fires workers, engages in international trade with authoritarian regimes, and has been accused of "slavery." ❖ This unlikely hybrid is the Histadrut, Israel's huge exclusivist labor federation. In Israel, under agreements with employers and the government, the Histadrut represents all workers, including Palestinians living in Israel and those living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. ❖ The English name of the Histadrut, the General Federation of Hebrew

In carrying out its Zionist mandate, the Histadrut openly, systematically, and sometimes violently denied benefits to the Palestinian workforce.

Workers in the Land of Israel, foretells the implications of Zionist ideology on native Palestinians. Launched in 1920, the organization was designed to be the cornerstone of Zionist settlement of Arab lands and, in the words of former Prime Minister Golda Meir, "a great colonizing agency."

From the outset the federation's goals were to promote an exclusively Jewish state consisting of immigrants, and to install monopolistic control over that state's economy, as well as the land of Palestine. In the period before 1948, the socialist Mapai-dominated Jewish Agency paved the way for the General Federation to organize the entire range of industrial and commercial companies, as well as cooperatives, and even to take under its wing Israel's armed forces. The first secretary-general of the Histadrut during the British mandate was to become the first Israeli prime minister, David Ben-Gurion.

Through its control of collective and cooperative settlements (*kibbutzim* and *moshavim*), the Histadrut actively participated in the occupation of Palestinian land. It purchased the land from needy peasants and acquired it from "absentee" landowners. At the same time, it took control of major spheres of the economy—marketing, commerce, construction, banking, insurance, and manufacturing—and increasingly took over the administration of pensions, health insurance, cooperative housing, training programs, and other social services that were provided to Jewish workers.

But in carrying out its Zionist mandate, the Histadrut openly, systemically, and sometimes violently denied benefits to the Palestinian workforce. Early in its history, the Histadrut picketed Israeli employers who gave work to Palestinians, and it waged massive campaigns to promote the sale of "Jewish produce" while boycotting all Arab-made goods.

Although the Palestinian workforce kept growing, and 160,000 Palestinian workers had officially become Israeli citizens, the Histadrut continued for decades to exclude them from dues-paying membership and rights. By doing so the Histadrut could say that Palestinian workers were "unorganized masses" and, therefore, call for their dismissal by Israeli employers.

It took 30 years, however, for the labor monolith to awaken to the potential value that exploitation of the Palestinian workforce, as well as trade with the West Bank and Gaza and later dumping excess products there, could bring to the Israeli economy. In 1959, the Histadrut began extending its perverse version of union representation, claiming that it represented Palestinian citizens of Israel and beginning to deduct union dues from their wages while offering them no benefits in return.

Today Palestinian-Israeli employees are estimated to comprise 10 percent of the labor federation's membership, yet the Histadrut still does not deal with them directly. Rather it operates through a special "Arab Department," whose function, to judge from known conditions and experiences, is to prevent the election of anyone but Jewish Israelis to local union offices or worker councils.

Moreover, some 90,000 Palestinian workers, who for years have crossed into Israel from the West Bank and Gaza every day in search of work, have been subjected to the worst forms of harassment, discrimination, and abuse.

PHOTO: RICK REINHARD

AN ISRAELI CONSTRUCTION SITE AT A STANDSTILL DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF PALESTINIAN LABOR.

❖

Their wages are estimated to be at least 50 percent lower than those of organized Jewish workers, and they are bereft of social benefits. To save the cost of transporting the Palestinians to and from the West Bank and Gaza, the Histadrut itself (which often employs Palestinians in construction jobs) has been among Israeli employers who have locked non-citizen workers behind barbed wire, under armed guard, in overnight detention camps. Numerous assaults, burnings of workers' shelters, arrests, and even deaths have resulted from such apartheid-like treatment.

Over the years, through its affiliate *Solel Boneh*, the Histadrut, Israel's largest employer after the government, has erected at least one-quarter of all Israeli settlements on the West Bank—settlements that the United States and the United Nations have condemned as illegal. Two other Histadrut affiliates are in the business of transporting Israeli settlers to jobs in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Labor and employer relations represent only one dimension of the Histadrut's astonishingly wide-ranging activities. The largest share of Israel's trade with South Africa is carried out by this hybrid union/management organization.

Again, this activity is carried out by a giant affiliate. But to escape public condemnation the trade with South Africa is cloaked, not in the name of the Histadrut or its affiliates, but in the names of individual union officials. In a similar covert arrangement, *Soltam Enterprises,* owned by the Histadrut affiliate *Koor,* has been a major supplier of arms to Iran, from the time of the Shah up to the recent Iran-contra scandal.

In another extraordinary step, last fall the U.S. Trade Representative convened hearings to receive evidence about the mistreatment of Palestinian workers.

Despite the long tradition of democratice and inclusive values practiced by the U.S. organized labor movement—as opposed to the Histadrut's racist and exclusivist values—there has been a longstanding love affair between American labor and the Histadrut. Scores of American union leaders have journeyed to Israel and come back rubbing their eyes in wonderment. They could not help but admire this huge, powerful labor federation operating with seemingly unbridled success on so many levels while maintaining parity with private management and the government.

Even when they learn of the Histadrut's undeniable abuses of workers, many Americans continue to defend the organization, succumbing to the Israeli line that Palestinians are nothing but terrorists dedicated to Israel's violent overthrow.

For decades, American labor unions have been a willing pillar of Israel's shaky economy, buying millions of dollars worth of low-interest Israel Bonds, with or without their members' knowledge. Since Israel pays commissions on bond purchases, many union business agents or elected officials have reaped substantial benefits from such purchases, which yield the union as little as 3 percent interest.

But all is far from well for the union/management behemoth. After many years of uninformed and uncritical support for the Histadrut, American labor is beginning to wake up. In the face of many years of unwavering financial and political support, especially on the national level, local unions have taken the lead in exposing the tentacled monster. The unions have introduced resolutions into their regional union bodies that condem the harsh treatment of Palestinian workers and the shutdown and suppression of their unions. And American union delegations have begun visiting occupied Palestine to view conditions for themselves.

In another extraordinary step, last fall the U.S. Trade Representative convened hearings to receive evidence about the mistreatment of Palestinian workers. Under U.S. law, nations that infringe upon workers' rights may lose their duty-free privileges, a penalty that would have been a serious blow to Israel. The hearings produced negative commentary about the Histadrut that must have surprised many American labor unionists. But the testimony was not given wide exposure, and because of a technicality, the United States has refused to pass judgment on the Histadrut's practices. But the fact that the hearings were held at all is a sign that reality is beginning to catch

Continued on page 43

Mitchell Kaidy is a freelance journalist. He was New York State President of the American Newspaper Guild (AFL-CIO), and executive assistant to the chairman of the New York State Senate Committee on Labor.

HARARI ISRAEL'S MAN IN PANAMA

WHY THE U.S. IGNORES THE ISRAELI CONNECTION

BY JANE HUNTER

Foreign policy is a cynical game, and cynics are all too aware that the true intentions of a nation's leaders often directly contradict their public proclamations and even their actions. Perhaps this is what is happening in Panama. For three years the United States has been trying to remove that country's strongman, Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, from power. With all the pronouncements, the economic sanctions, and the U.S. troops sent to the Canal Zone it seems evident that the United States is sincerely trying to oust Noriega. Only the cynic would wonder why, if Washington is serious about dislodging Noriega, it has not managed to remove one of his main pillars of support—Israel.

Until 1986, both Israel and the United States lent their full support to Gen. Noriega. Never mind his known links to narcotrafficking or his propensity, while on the CIA's payroll, to share with Cuba and other adversaries U.S. intelligence he gathered in Panama, the site of a key U.S. military installation. Noriega also hosted a major U.S.-Israeli operation based in Panama to aid the Nicaraguan contras until late 1985. According to several accounts, that operation was heavily involved in, and partly funded by, narcotrafficking.

In 1986, the group in the Reagan administration that would later be implicated in the Iran-contra affair decided that Gen. Noriega was not sufficiently committed to aiding the contras. News stories citing sources in the White House began to appear, alleging that Noriega had amassed a huge fortune from the protection money paid by Colombian cocaine merchants. Stories also appeared detailing Noriega's alleged responsibility for the murder of a man who threatened to present proof of Noriega's links to illegal drug trafficking. And finally, Noriega dismissed Panama's president when that hapless figurehead began an investigation of the murder.

New U.S. regulations began to drain capital from Panama City's international banking center. These were followed by covert aid to opposition forces and harsh economic sanctions to buttress Washington's demands that Noriega go into exile. A U.S. court in Florida indicted Noriega on narcotics charges. Even liberal members of Congress, usually opposed to U.S. intervention, began urging the White House to remove Noriega from power. Even U.S. allies were pressed into the campaign to get Noriega out of Panama.

However, Shimon Peres, then Israel's foreign minister, made it a point to announce that he had been asked to appeal to Noriega to resign, but had decided not to. Peres's announcement came amid reports that Noriega was considering exile in one of the two "palatial" homes United Press International reported he owned in Israel.

Israel values Panama, with its freewheeling ruler Noriega and its duty-free trade zone in Colón, which Mike Harari calls "the perfect funnel for channeling Israeli trade with

South and Central America." Harari, who praised Panama's trade facilities to a reporter for the Israeli paper *Hadashot,* is Israel's man in Panama. And the narcotics-linked contra aid operation was called the Harari Network.

Israel uses Harari to administer its $20 million worth of weapons and $17 million of civilian merchandise that go through Panama annually. It also uses him to conduct all the serious business of its relationship with Panama. The Israeli ambassador takes care of social events and other formalities—a good division of labor, as Harari does not like to be seen or photographed. (One of the few known photographs of Harari shows him with Gen. Noriega, touring an Israeli military base.)

Writing in the *New York Post* last year, Uri Dan, an associate of Israeli Trade and Industry Minister Ariel Sharon, claimed that Harari "personally fired both Panama's ambassador to Israel and Israel's ambassador to Panama." The ambassador to Israel, Col. Eduardo Herrera Hassan, happened to be the man Washington favors to replace Noriega. Herrera told reporters that Harari had also caused him to be fired from the Panamanian military.

The only official title Harari holds is that of Panama's honorary consul in Israel, where he continues to maintain a home. But Noriega's political opponents have another name for him. In a leaflet circulated in September 1987, a group believed to enjoy Washington's support referred to Harari as "the man behind the dictator." According to Uri Dan (Ariel Sharon's associate), Harari has been instrumental in helping Noriega resist U.S. attempts to topple the general; he has equipped the Panamanian leader's bunker (graced with a picture of the late Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan) with sophisticated Israeli electronic devices.

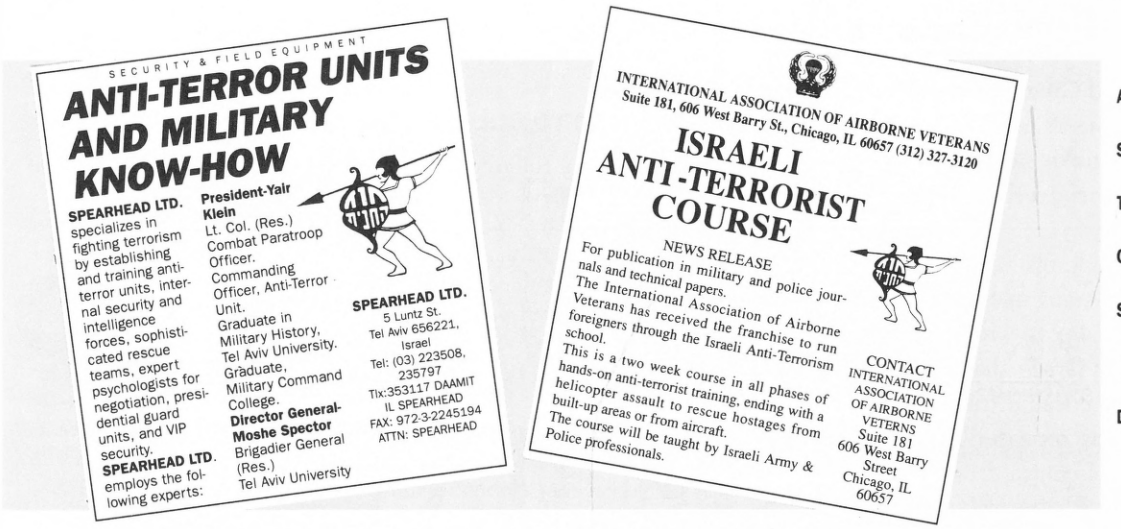
ABC interviewed a pilot who said he had flown both arms and drugs for the Harari Network, loading cocaine in Colombia and bringing it to Panama for eventual transshipment to the United States.

Uri Dan wrote that Israeli military veterans recruited by Harari to work as Noriega's bodyguards had supervised attacks on his political opponents. Last year, the *Miami Herald* reported that it had learned from intelligence sources that Harari had arranged for Noriega's Panamanian bodyguards to have Israeli training. UPI reported that Harari had trained Panamanian military forces in "interrogation and security techniques," and had sold Noriega eavesdropping equipment that was used to monitor political opponents.

It is Israel's standard practice to operate through unofficial representatives, "cutouts" in intelligence parlance. These men are almost always former intelligence or military officers and the word "former" is widely regarded as a flimsy euphemism. Mike Harari now operates as a businessman and an adviser to Noriega. Uri Dan says he has helped Noriega launder his funds through Swiss and other foreign banks.

Harari was originally an officer of Israel's intelligence service Mossad. According to the Israeli newspaper *Hadashot*, Harari was still working for Mossad when he arrived in Panama and set to work organizing a guard unit for Gen. Omar Torrijos, then Panama's leader. Torrijos called Harari "my mentor." The exact date of Harari's arrival in Panama is not known, but it is certain that he was there in 1979, when he attended a meeting at which an emissary from President Jimmy Carter asked that Panama grant asylum to the deposed Shah of Iran. It is also unclear whether he is currently on the agency's payroll, but last year the *Independent*, a respected London daily, quoted well-informed Panamanian sources who said that Harari was still an active, senior member of "Israeli intelligence."

Before coming to Panama, Harari was Mexico City station chief for Mossad, directing all its activities in Mexico and Central America. Harari had been part of the elite team set up to hunt down and assassinate Palestinians suspected of taking part in the killing of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics. His assignment to Mexico came after he and other members of the team were involved in one of Mossad's worst embarrassments, the killing of a Moroccan waiter in Norway in 1973 in the mistaken belief that he was



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Palestinian activist Ali Salameh.

President Torrijos built strong ties to the Panamanian Jewish community. He started a tradition in the upper echelons of the military by sending his children to Jewish schools, and he encouraged Jewish businessmen to fill the vacuum created by his dislodging of the old entrenched merchant class. That old merchant class has been at the heart of the Panamaian opposition, while the country's Jewish community has largely supported Noriega. A 12,000-tree forest in Israel is dedicated to Torrijos.

After Torrijos was killed in a plane crash in 1981, Harari attached himself to Noriega, then the head of military intelligence. Noriega was soon promoted to head of the armed forces (renamed the Panamanian Defense Forces, after Israel's Israeli Defense Forces) and at the ceremony marking his ascension, Noriega decorated Harari.

In April 1986, Israel's friends in Washington warned Israel to get "Mossad" out of Panama, before "its close ties to Noriega are . . . revealed," reported the New York-based Hebrew weekly *Yisrael Shelanu*. In 1987, U.S. officials began pressing Israel to bring Harari home.

In early 1988, New York Senator Alfonse D'Amato, backed by Morris Abram, then chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, requested that Harari be recalled. Israel sent a foreign ministry official to talk to Harari, but its heart was not in the effort. According to *The Washington Post*, Moshe Arad, Israel's ambassador to the United States, tried to block the move. At any rate, Harari stayed in Panama.

Israeli officials steadfastly claimed that Harari was a private citizen. One official insisted that he was no longer an Israeli citizen! Whatever his status, in June 1988, Harari appeared at a "posh reception" in Israel where the guests included Shimon Peres and Abba Eban, according to Uri Dan. U.S. officials told reporters that Harari's continued presence in Panama was causing friction between the United States and Israel.

At that point, information about the Harari Network began to emerge. Testifying before the Senate Narcotics, Terrorism and International Operations Subcommittee on April 4, 1988, José Blandón, a former intelligence aid to Noriega, said the network was established in 1982 to supply arms to Central America and the contras. Blandón also said that, until it was closed down in 1986, the network carried drugs on the same aircraft and through the same airstrips in Costa Rica it used for arms deliveries. It was primarily upon Blandón's testimony that the indictment of Noriega was based.

That same week ABC News reported that the Harari Network had delivered illegal drugs to the United States. ABC interviewed a pilot who said he had flown both arms and drugs for the Harari Network, loading cocaine in Colombia and bringing it to Panama for eventual transshipment to the United States. "I guess you'd have to say at that time, I felt my primary employer was Israel. Secondarily, my employer was the U.S. of America," said the pilot, who used the pseudonym Harry.

Richard Brenneke, who purchased arms in Eastern Europe for the Harari Network, claims that when he asked the man who recruited him—Pesakh Ben-Or, the Mossad station chief in Guatemala—whether the operation was authorized by Washington, he was given the tele-

phone number of Donald Gregg, then Vice President George Bush's national security adviser. Brenneke says he called Gregg, who reassured him about the network.

Brenneke made his claims about this call and a second one he says he made two years later, in which he says he complained to Gregg about the mixing of arms and cocaine trafficking. Gregg, who has repeatedly denied any knowledge of contra drug smuggling, supposedly told Brenneke to "do what you were assigned to do" and not to "question the decisions of your betters." This occurred in May 1988, when rivals in the presidential primaries were calling attention to Vice President Bush's involvement in the Iran-contra affair. Bush and his supporters leveled harsh attacks at Brenneke's credibility, and, as Brenneke had only his telephone records to prove that the calls had been made, his charges have never been regarded as fully credible. Yet, much of the rest of his story has been confirmed by José Blandón and others.

Moreover, the Harari Network was also linked to Donald Gregg through Felix Rodriguez, a friend of Gregg's whom he met when they both served in the CIA in South Vietnam. Gregg helped Rodriguez establish himself in El Salvador, where he served as the main contact for the secret contra airlift run by Oliver North and met frequently in Washington with Gregg and three times with Bush. Both José Blandón and ABC News said that Felix Rodriguez was the Harari Network's U.S. contact in El Salvador.

It is perhaps the thread connecting Bush, through his aide Donald Gregg, to the Harari Network that Gen. Noriega had in mind when he threatened on a documentary aired in London to disclose information embarrassing to Bush. Perhaps it is that threat which causes the administration to plead helplessness and counsel patience to those urging it to "do something" about Noriega. Perhaps the reason that nothing President Bush has attempted to do—the economic sanctions, the clandestine radio broadcasts, the money passed to the Panamanian opposition—has succeeded is that he is only going through the motions, placating Noriega's foes while only mildly discomfiting the general. Perhaps keeping Mike Harari in Panama helps the president achieve that delicate balance. ❖

Jane Hunter is editor of the monthly publication, Israeli Foreign Affairs.

ISRAELIS LINKED TO COLOMBIAN DRUG TRAFFICKING

News reports that Mike Harari, along with some of Israel's top military advisors, was involved in arming and training paramilitary forces and assassination teams sponsored by the Colombian Medellín drug cartel have prompted a new request from Washington for Israel to "reassess" its relationship with Panama, NBC television news reported on August 29.

On August 21, three days after Colombian drug mercenaries assassinated Luis Galan, a leading Colombian presidential candidate, the network broadcast a video of Israelis training drug lords' armies that it said was filmed by the cartel. Harari does not appear in the video, but NBC cited reports from Bogota that Harari has been active in Colombia.

Two Israelis who appear in the video and are heard speaking Hebrew to each other have been identified as retired Lt. Col. Yair Klein and Lt. Col. Amatzia Shu'ali. Both are Israeli reserve officers. Klein is president of *Spearhead, Ltd.*, a Tel Aviv-based company that exports arms and "security expertise." Shu'ali, who has often gone to Central America to train the Guatemalan military, also works for the company, as do two other Israelis—Lt. Col. Avraham Tzadaka and Col. Yaakov Brine—reported by Israel Television to have also trained the drug lords' armies.

These "narco-paramilitaries" are blamed for the murders of thousands of leftist and grass-roots Colombian leaders, as well as judges, journalists, and other anti-drug officials. It is these mercenaries who will carry out the drug barons' threatened "war to the end" if Colombia continues its current crackdown on the cartel.

NBC reported that the Israelis were hired by José Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, one of the top Medellín bosses. During one training session last year, according to a report prepared in March by Colombia's domestic security agency and cited by the *Chicago Tribune* on August 29, Klein and his men stayed at Rodriguez Gacha's estate in Magdalena while they trained assassins known as sicarios. Rodriguez Gacha is believed to have ordered the assassination of Luis Galan.

The Israelis also supplied sophisticated arms and explosives to the cartels and installed electronic security systems for them. After Galan's murder the Israelis were hastily smuggled out of Colombia. The connections Harari developed during the period he led the Harari Network may have been helpful in securing the *Spearhead* contracts to train the cartel squads. It is also possible that Mike Harari was involved in procuring the weapons used by the cartel armies.

The Israeli government has denied any connection to the *Spearhead* operatives, just as it has denied that Harari is acting in an official capacity. It has begun an investigation and seized the passports of Klein and Shu'ali, but it is unlikely to prosecute the men because Klein has threatened to name other ranking retired officers—including a Knesset member who, he says, "was involved in business that he was permitted to do, like we were all permitted to do."

IBRAHIM SOUSS'S LETTER TO A JEWISH FRIEND

BY HALA JABBOUR

Over the past four decades, Palestinian artists have used their skills largely as historic documentation of their tragedy and their emotions. Thus, by studying Palestinian literature one can follow the evolution that took place over all 40 of those years within the Palestinian collective consciousness. That evolution is not only political—going from outraged enmity to rational calls for coexistence with Israel—but encompasses the whole spectrum of Palestinian life. ❖ Ibrahim Souss eloquently portrays the political evolution that took place within the Palestinian soul in his book, *Letter To A Jewish Friend.* The author is a Palestinian artist who was born in Jerusalem and had a career as a concert pianist. His love for music surfaces as he seeks to explain it to his Jewish friend. "I am hesitating," Souss writes. "Should I talk to you about music? The reason I am hesitating is that it seems perverse to mention harmony when the relationship between us is so discordant." Souss, like many Palestinian activists, changed professional course after the shattering 1967 war with Israel and the monumental emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Having witnessed almost every step of the ravishment of his country and the agony of his people—"In Israel, human rights apply only to Jews!"—he trekked through life, his psyche becoming part of the colossal Palestinian psychological trauma that took him from one end of the emotional spectrum and smashed him into each consecutive stage. "We have paid a high price: exile, suffering, bloodshed. And despite all that, Israel claims to be the victim and makes the Palestinians out to be its persecutors." ❖ Finally, the musician decided to give up piano recitals and become a politician. Today, he is the PLO representative in France. Nevertheless, the artist within him never died, and Souss—who had tried to pur-

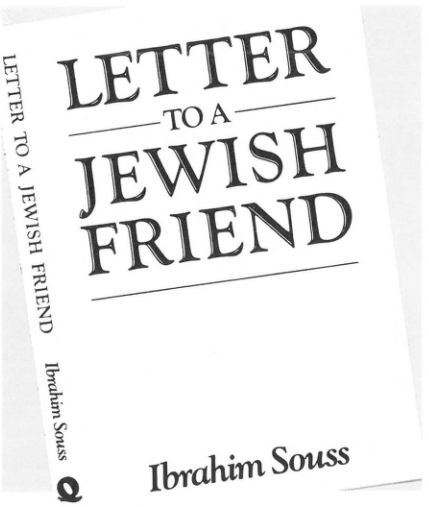
sue his love for the piano alongside his love of Palestine but had seen his efforts in that direction unnecessarily thwarted—found an expression for his artistic proclivities through writing.

Letter To A Jewish Friend is exactly what its title conveys. It is very simply a letter written by a Palestinian to his Jewish friend. The saga of Palestine is revealed in the "letter" as its writer appeals to the Jewish ethics and his friend's morality. The book is produced in a handsome edition by Quartet Books with print that is big and easy to read, very well suited for a letter.

Naturally, *Letter To A Jewish Friend* would evoke different emotions from a Palestinian or Arab Nationalist reader than from other readers. Nevertheless, the book has its universal appeal. The *Herald Tribune*, published in England, described the book as "graceful and poignant . . . . A taut, emotional appeal for attention to the Palestinians' plight." The Paris-based *Le Monde* newspaper wrote that this "little book is a eulogy of tolerance."

It is indeed all of that. Moreover, it has said what almost every Palestinian yearns to tell the Jewish people, the Israelis, and the rest of the world, though most would not have said it in the predominantly tolerant tone of the writer. I say "predominantly," because Souss tries to maintain the tolerant, nationalist, objective approach, and to that end he generally succeeds.

But Ibrahim Souss does not mince his words. He tells his Israeli friend exactly what he thinks of him. My favorite passage is when the writer tells his friend that, "No right



allows people to deprive others of their birthright, even if it's in the name of God and all His prophets." More importantly, Souss lays upon the Jewish people the brunt and the guilt of his people's plight. He accepts none of the excuses or any of the fake justifications with which Israeli leaders—and their Jewish spokespersons—have conned the world and their own people.

An example of how the Israelis duped their own people is cited in the last third of the book, when Souss tells the story of a Palestinian homeowner who returns in 1967 to the house he had abandoned in 1948 as a result of terrorization by the Stern and Irgun gangs. When the Palestinian finds an old Jewish Rumanian living in the house, he tells the Israeli, "This is my house."

"I know," the old man answers. "In 1949, when I came here from Rumania, I had no idea. They told me they'd built these houses especially for us."

Indeed they did! "Don't scream!" shouts Souss to his Jewish friend. "The owners of this land were Arabs. Legally the Jews had no right to it. If the spiritual appeal of the land made immigration inevitable, they should have gone about it in a

LETTER TO A JEWISH FRIEND.

IBRAHIM SOUSS.

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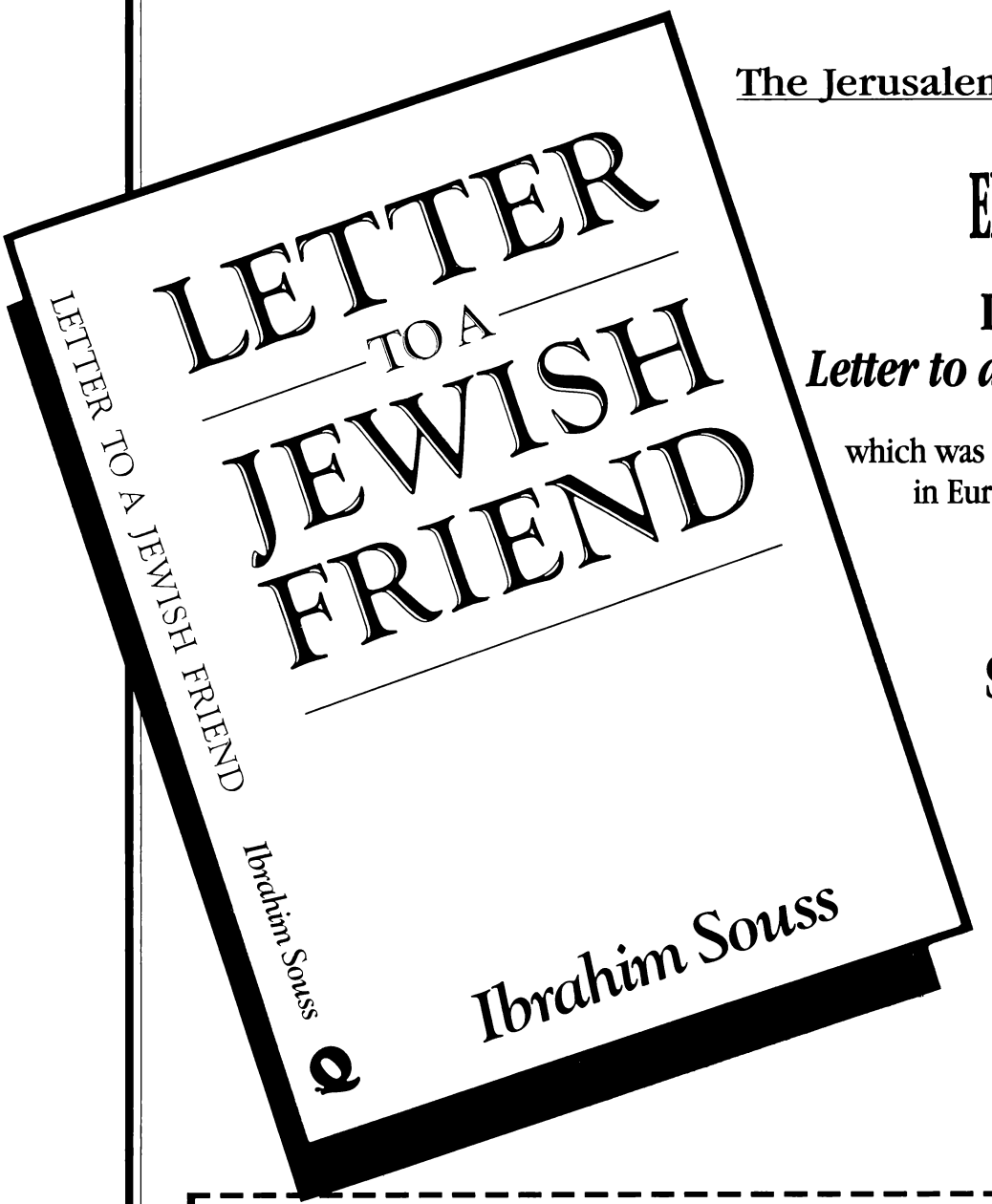
❖

different way. If they wanted the existing inhabitants to accept them, they should have made it quite clear that they are willing to live in peace with them. They could hardly expect the Arabs to welcome them with open arms when they made no secret of their intention to drive them from their lands!" I believe that every Palestinian would repeat exactly what Souss shouts in this paragraph.

In another chapter of his book, and after chastizing his Jewish friend for distorting facts and history in order to justify the Israeli colonization of Palestine, Souss turns sarcastic. "Oh, but of course, I almost forgot . . . . Whatever the circumstances, the wolf is always Palestinian, and the lamb always Israeli." He goes on to tell his listener that Jews do not have a monopoly on tragedy and that "Israeli bombing raids cause as much terror to Palestinian children as do hails of machine-gun fire from Palestinian guerillas to Israeli children."

Ibrahim Souss set out to air his grievances and to tell it as it is. His book is genuine, written in an easy, conversational style that is appealing and unpretentious. I commend the writer's efforts and strongly recommend buying the book as a special gift, especially for . . . a Jewish friend! ❖

Hala Jabbour is author of A Woman of Nazareth *published in 1986. She is currently serving as coordinator of the Washinton, D.C. chapter of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC).*



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THE SARAFAND DRESS OF THE 1930s EMBROIDERED WITH SILK THREAD ON IMPORTED LINEN. ❖

PHOTO: STUDIO ABOOD

Preserving the LEGACY through NATIONAL COSTUMES

BY FARIDA TEAGUE

Palestinian National Costumes, Preserving The Legacy is a documentary about a simple craft that dates back to 1000 B.C., a craft the wares of which are mentioned in the Bible, and also in references to textile industries found in the archeological discoveries of the Canaanite inhabitants of Palestine. ❖ Palestinian embroidery is a symbol, not only of national heritage, but also of identity and unity within each village. This artistry has been such an insignia of ethnic pride that mothers have passed the skill to daughters for centuries, and it was once the Palestinian woman's means of artistic expression. ❖ It has provided "precious gifts during peacetime . . . [and] prized loot in wartime." It has been such a public symbol that

DEIR TUREIF DRESS EMBOSSED WITH THE FAMOUS BETHLEHEM COUCHING STITCH (1930).

military oppressors now try to suppress its existence, or adopt the national costume as their own. However, the modern world has made apparel styles more generic and less a badge of identity. And a land engulfed in a war for mere existence has made artistic expression almost trivial.

For a people who must fight for human and civil rights, people whose heritage is being eroded with every passing day, what importance could lie in a videotape about stitchery and clothing? Perhaps none. But then again, it might serve as a gesture of solidarity for a people so long wronged—a fiber of continuity for those who have taken sanctuary in other countries.

To document the evolution of Palestinian embroidery and to record its significance, a Palestinian-American couple from New Jersey, Farah and Hanan Manayyer, has produced a 70-minute video presentation featuring bridal and ceremonial costumes and related wares that showcase this ancient art. The tape's first segment is a 30-minute dress show. Part two provides close-ups of stitches, patterns, and dress accessories, including the heavy silver jewelry characteristic of the region.

Evidently produced with quality in mind, the tape's lighting and sound are excellent. Maha Munayyer's narration is clear and concise. The film shows with detail the fine handwoven linens, silks, polished cotton and sateen used in this craft, in addition to home-dyed silk thread stitchery. The vivid colors and skilled needlework make even stitches with whimsical names look exotic. Patterns exhibited reflected the significance of the artist's environment and everyday life. Maha explains how in southern Palestine, the thread's color and the pattern of the stitch could also be an emblem of the wearer's marital status. Religious motifs (crescent or cross) reflect, of course, the wearer's beliefs.

The only sensation that the film cannot express is the incredible feeling of wearing such a masterpiece.

Costumes from all areas of Palestine are featured, with each area's characteristic stitches or fashion noted. Various headdress styles are also exhibited. The only sensation that the film cannot express is the incredible feeling of wearing such a masterpiece. Knowing this folk art's history and the significance of its labor is stirring and thought provoking, to say the least. The dresses are a tapestry of history.

This documentary is a historical reference as well as a token of solidarity. People interested only in embroidery and weaving will find excellent photographic work showcasing beautiful fabrics and stitches. This group will especially enjoy the tape's second segment. The videotape is an excellent study tool.

The Munayyers are to be commended for their altruistic endeavor to record this vital part of their legacy. In addition to the tape, they have also produced a beautiful color poster and a greeting card. The poster has been framed and displayed with the grace of *objets d'art* in international business offices, as well as private dwellings.

News of this project's cultural significance is beginning to spread across the United States, as well as the Middle East. The film was displayed for five days by the United Nations, during International Solidarity Week with the Palestinian People. It has also been displayed at numerous civic group and heritage festival screenings around the country. An edited Arabic language version, produced in cooperation with Kuwait National Television, has been showcased in Palestine and other Middle Eastern countries.

The Munayyer Collection, which now totals almost 200 dresses, is considered one of the largest and best Palestinian dress collections in the world. ❖

The 70-minute tape costs $50.00 and is available with either Arabic or English narration. A portion of the proceeds are donated to humanitarian organizations in the Holy Land.

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Farida Teague is a freelance writer specializing in Middle East art, craft, and dance.

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SABRA AND SHATILA *continued from page 12*

The official Israeli investigation of the massacre, headed by the Kahan Commission, provided a quasi-legal facade of discipline and supposed punishment for those responsible. However, the Kahan Commission placed primary responsibility for the massacre on the right-wing Lebanese militias, and only secondary responsibility on nine Israeli officials. Among them, Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who was not asked to resign. Nor was Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir asked to resign, and he became prime minister. Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, architect of the invasion, was aware of the "use" of Phalangists in the camps before the entry of Israeli troops. He was dismissed from his position, but within a short time he was elected a member of Knesset and is now a cabinet minister, polishing his image for a run at prime minister. Gen. Raphael Eitan, primary coordinator with the Phalangists, was allowed to retire and was soon elected to the Knesset, where he is an influential member.

All could have been convicted of war crimes and genocide, yet they are allowed to function as prominent government officials. Will not failure to root out their criminal influence haunt future peace negotiations and encourage Israeli extremists for years to come? The mere fact that Ariel Sharon can travel across the United States virtually unchallenged as he markets his own autobiography is a graphic symbol of the danger ahead!

What is the fate of the nearly 400,000 Palestinian civilians still living in Lebanon, most of them stateless, and all of them living in an extremely vulnerable situation? Do they not have a right to a homeland, a state, to grant them some form of security and protection of their fundamental human rights?

Was not the United States responsible, directly through Philip Habib as negotiator with Israel and the PLO, for the protection of Palestinian civilians remaining in Lebanon after the August 1982 withdrawal of PLO forces? The final withdrawal agreement, signed by Philip Habib, the PLO, and Israel, makes this abundantly clear. The blood of the victims at Sabra and Shatila falls from the hands of the U.S. government as much as it does from the hands of the right-wing Lebanese militias and the Israelis. Perhaps the most astute American journalist within the major press, Joseph Hirsch of the *Christian Science Monitor,* wrote on September 22, 1982: *In other words, this atrocity was made possible because American taxpayers have made Israel the dominant military power in the Middle East.*

Will there not be more massacres of Palestinians as long as the Shamirs, Sharons, Eitans, and others of their ilk are dominant forces in Israeli political life?

For most of us, the Sabra and Shatila massacre holds little political meaning. For others it is a graphic reminder of the future hell that is possible. The words of a *Jerusalem Post* editorial shortly after the 1982 massacre are applicable to us all: "The stain of Sabra and Shatila is stuck to us and we cannot remove it." ❖

"DAYS OF RAGE" *continued from page 29*

nomic and social issues?) does not an expert make. From what he said on the program, though, it appeared that he might have picked up a few of his biases from his then-boss, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and begun building on them.

Among his milder comments were that *Days of Rage* was a "paid political advertisement," a "falsification of history," and a pack of "lies." At one point, he intimated that Palestinian children lured Israeli soldiers into the refugee camps so that they could be "stoned to death." Despite attempts by Hodding Carter to cut him off to allow others more opportunity to speak, Keyes bulldozed his way through the session arguing that "Jordan is Palestine," and stopped just short of suggesting that all the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza should be forced to go there. The only thing that seemed to stop him was that he just had not addressed the problem of how that would be done.

The day before the showing of the film, Scott Pendleton of the *Christian Science Monitor,* happily bucking the media tide, wrote this comment about the wrap-around: *If "wrapping" is the way to redress controversy, then* Intifada: The Palestinians and Israel *should be likewise "wrapped" with a documentary on the media power of the Israeli lobby.* ❖

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THE HISTADRUT *continued from page 32*

up with Israel's image in the United States.

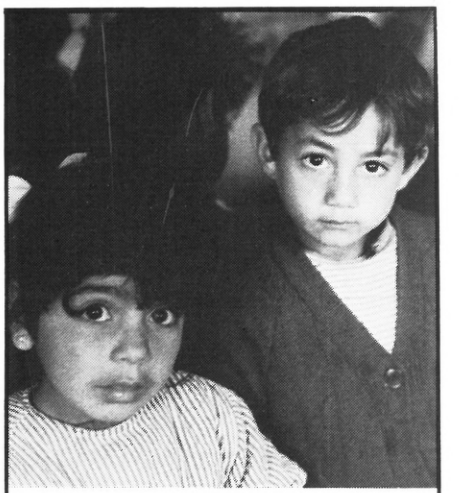
Other nations' labor groups are also beginning to react. The British opposition Labour party has adopted resolutions condemning the Histadrut, and some local bodies have broken links with the Histadrut.

Internally, the Histadrut faces divisive contradictions and defections connected to the empire's two-faced makeup. According to the *Middle East Labor Bulletin,* Danny Rosilo, the director of a Histadrut holding company, said he "fought the (Israeli) trade unions, which were demanding both tax cuts and government spending cuts."

Another contradiction has become evident when unionized Israelis have attempted to strike. Strikes have been stopped in their tracks by the fact that the labor/management empire controls the central strike fund!

A depressing description of the condition of Palestinian workers was provided to Israeli readers in 1987 by the mass-circulation Hebrew newspaper *Yediot Ahronot: These are slaves, sub-citizens who are suspected of everything. They swell under the floor tiles of Tel Aviv, locked up overnight in the citrus grove, near sewage dumps, in shelters that in time of peace serve only rats, on the roof, in an underground parking station of Tel Aviv, in a grocery stand.*

These are the conditions permitted and institutionalized by the Histadrut empire, the labor organization that officially represents *all* workers in Israel.❖



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WHO KILLED AMJAD JABRIL?

Editor's Note: As a policy, we do not reprint articles or editorials from other publications—this is an exception. The following editorial, which appeared on August 29 in the Washington Times, *is important not only because of the issue that it addresses, but also because it is the opinion of a major conservative American newspaper. It is high time that the press in the United States addresses critical issues that might not be to Israel's liking. We commend the* Washington Times *on a job well done.*

A 14-year-old American boy is shot in the back on a hillside overlooking an Arab town in the Middle East. His body is discovered two days later. The government that controls the town releases sketchy information about the circumstances of his death based on an autopsy performed by one of its doctors. Witnesses, however, claim to have seen the government's troops firing guns in the vicinity where the boy's body was found at approximately the time he died. But an army spokesman claims the army has already been cleared of guilt.

This is the sort of incident that could cause great outrage in the United States. But it hasn't.

The boy killed was Amjad Hussein Jabril, who was born in 1975 in Colorado of an American father and a Palestinian mother. For the last four years he had lived with his mother in the occupied West Bank. His father lives in Miami. On Wednesday, August 16, in the town of Al-Bireh, Amjad left home to go to a nearby mosque for the afternoon prayer. After the prayer service, at approximately 5:30 p.m., there was a clash between some local youths and soldiers from the Israeli Defense Forces. The boys ran away from the soldiers, and shortly thereafter shooting was heard on a nearby hillside. Amjad Jabril never returned home from the evening prayer.

On Friday, Amjad's aunt went to the Israeli military compound at Ramallah and, she claims, was told by an officer there that Amjad had been taken into custody. But that evening his decomposing body was discovered by a shepherd on the hillside where the IDF had chased the Palestinian boys. He had been shot in the back.

According to the State Department, the Israeli government promised Amjad's family and the U.S. government that the family would be allowed to appoint an independent pathologist to observe the autopsy conducted on the boy's body. The family chose Dr. Derrick Pounder, the chairman of the Department of Forensic Medicine at the University of Dundee in Great Britain. Dr. Pounder made plans to fly to Israel Sunday morning. But the Abu Kabir Institute for Forensic Medicine, an official organization of the Israeli government, reneged on the agreement with Amjad's family and the U.S. government and performed an unobserved autopsy at 7:00 a.m. Israeli time Sunday, just before Dr. Pounder was to board his plane.

Dr. Pounder told the *Washington Times* that he finally got through on the phone to a Dr. Hiss, director of the Abu Kabir Institute, last Tuesday. Dr. Hiss told Dr. Pounder that his "instructions" were that Dr. Pounder should not be given access to the tissues removed from Amjad's corpse or the clothes he was wearing when he was shot until at least Friday, August 25. This was after Dr. Pounder would have had to return to Great Britain. Dr. Pounder protested, but Dr. Hiss was adamant. So Dr. Pounder brought his case to the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, which persuaded the Israeli government to allow him to examine the tissue Wednesday. Dr. Pounder was able to clarify one obvious forensic point that the Israelis hadn't: Amjad had been shot in the back.

Although the IDF seems to have prematurely exonerated itself of involvement in this crime, the State Department seems to be confident that the Israeli government will conduct a thorough investigation. If what has transpired so far is any indication, it won't happen spontaneously. The Bush administration shouldn't let the government in Jerusalem off the hook. We want justice for whoever killed Amjad Jabril. ❖

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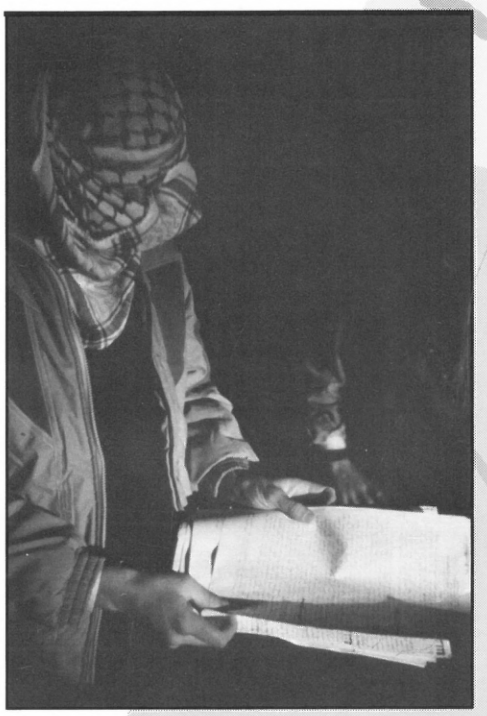

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